

# THE UNITY OF PROSE

From Description to Allegory

BY STANLEY STEWART

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## P R E F A C E

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The purpose of this book is to help the student develop his reading and writing skill. The essays and stories were chosen to suggest something about the range of possibilities open to the student of the English language. When one reads critically, whether what he reads is "literature" or not, he cannot remain passive, for effective understanding, and certainly meaningful criticism of a piece of writing, depend upon the reader's attention.

One of the assumptions of this book is that critical discussion has a way of coloring one's reading. The headings of the various Parts in this book embody a perspective on the reading matter included; neither writing about nor discussion of these or any other works proceeds very far without some use of technical vocabulary. Another assumption is that dangers arise as soon as such vocabulary is introduced. Many a bright science major has departed from his required course in English composition believing that the whole business of literary discussion is so much nonsense. And in the sense that he is often handed a set of categories such as "fiction," "non-fiction," "exposition," "imagery," "tone," "symbolic form," the fallacy of the undistributed middle (and about fourteen other fallacies), and all this along with the tacit assumption that these categories represent things immediately apprehensible to any intelligent student, the science major is right.

Further, when discussions of certain materials drift into areas of morality, social and/or aesthetic values, the sceptical student is doubly affronted by the implicit claim that solution to such problems will overtly or covertly be slipped to him during the course. No wonder the scientists across the country have sought to eliminate such courses from required curricula. For students are too often handed useless vocabulary, along with fashionable speculation on the world's and art's ills, and sent into the sophomore year writing as ineffectively as before. The only difference is that now

many of them swear never to take another course in English. They have been introduced to "literature."

I do not mean to suggest that critical vocabulary is necessarily useless: witness the headings to the Parts. The purpose of having a large number of Parts—each of which overlaps the preceding in some measure—is to minimize the use of such vocabulary as an end in itself, to tear down the imagined boundaries implied by the frequent use of such critical locutions as "fiction" and "non-fiction." There is no reason why the student's scepticism ought not to be encouraged. If critical language is required for essential and satisfying distinctions, the experience of reading will make that clear enough: we can point to evidences of "tone" and "myth," just as the astrophysicist can point to evidences of the neutrino. But we as English teachers cannot do the impossible: we cannot absolutely distinguish "fiction" from "non-fiction" in written prose, as careful study of the following Parts will show.

The question is, What is an appropriate response to the fact that we cannot make such absolute distinctions? We need not remain ignorant of common uses or applications of such terms as "history" and "literature." But neither should such terms be allowed to separate the non-professional from a knowledge of the objects of inquiries in these fields. Critical vocabulary ought to be used when it is useful, when it provides a meaningful distinction among things in the student's own experience. When we lean the heaviest on critical vocabulary we begin to talk nonsense: "But this is **literature!**" as if, if the document under consideration really were "literature," of necessity it must be good. More important, we have already begged the question of whether we can bound the set called "literature." And we have distanced ourselves from the good student who views such remarks as meaninglessly pedagogic.

So in this text we read a variety of works, beginning with a simple description of a goldfish and moving toward increasingly more complex uses of language. Yet we never cross real boundaries; we simply invoke language to help us describe different features of language. There is "description" in historical and fictive portions of the book. And many a story has a pointed argument to make. We proliferate boundaries in order to suggest how arbitrary they are. Categories once we take them with tongue in cheek, may still be helpful; at other times it may be more helpful to think of categories as unrelated to our reading.

As we move from one Part to another (in any direction), we do not move from a lesser to a greater category. If the tax man asks me to describe my job, it will not help me to present a finely turned argument against the income tax. Though argument may include description, description is not in competition with argument. The

doctrine of appropriateness underlies the rhetoric of this book. If we attend closely to the various examples, we may become aware of how our own situation as a student, and in particular as a writer in a composition class, involves rhetorical problems. The rhetorical problems of the classroom are not entirely different from those in other phases of life. The question isn't, What is the answer? But, What is the audience? Whom am I addressing? What is an appropriate response? What is the question?

The term "mode" is used in this book more to suggest the problem than to palm off an answer; generally, as we proceed further in the book (supposing a progress from earlier to later Parts), we note shifts in emphases. The way in which emphases are manipulated is what I mean by "mode." Mode is simply the **observable** dimension of an author's emphases. But it is much more important to notice the features of language which form these emphases than to know that is what I mean by "mode." In this restricted sense, one can speak of "description," "history," "argument," "tone," "fiction," "symbol," and so on without harassing the student with the notion that there are aspects of language that are somehow there, but elude all but the most febrile minds. One may find, for example, that the focus of discussion changes the meaning of the term "mode." If so, so be it. The important thing is the language.

If our attention is on the assigned reading, on the class discussion, and on our own writing, the vocabulary will take care of itself. But the converse is not true. Suppose, then, that we had twenty, or forty, Part headings, as many Parts in this book as we have entries, all in their present order. Whatever differences, whatever similarities in the language as appear in the entries, would still appear. It may be that by placing a story in one or another section we "structure" the discussion. One might well argue that such structuring facilitates discussion. But this "structure" or any structure ceases to be useful when it becomes an end in itself. And for this reason, it seems to me more useful to talk about a student's journal entry, or about an author's treatment of a particular subject, when that treatment is in front of all to see, than to drop yet another stereotyped essay on one of the hundred or so canned topics routinely handed to composition classes. Truth and justice can wait while we learn how language works, both in the writing of others, and in our own.

STANLEY STEWART

Riverside, California  
October, 1967





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*PART I*

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## ***SEEING AND DESCRIPTION: THE DESCRIPTIVE MODE***

Prose writing may be conveniently divided into two kinds of description, description of objects, real or imagined, and description of events, fictive or historical. Both categories lend themselves to prescriptive or persuasive variations; but persuasive prose seldom appears isolated from any pretense to describe some real or imagined world. When one is learning to write, however, it is helpful to bear in mind that these categories, and others such as “fiction” and “non-fiction,” are useful only so long as they aid rather than hinder communication. Yet every English instructor has heard the bright physics major complain that he cannot write concretely about literature because the subject is too abstract.

can adequately describe any object set in front of him he can adequately describe the features of a quite complex literary work. This does not mean that either task is simple. Few students when asked, for example, to describe the college auditorium will—at first try—provide sufficient detail in their description to differentiate the auditorium from a number of other buildings on campus.

Again, it is just as difficult to describe an object on one's person (without naming it) in such a way that the class will agree on what the object looks like. Successful description is based on careful observation of details; object **A** differs from object **B** in some recognizable way, or else the two objects cannot be distinguished. If the writer attends to such differences, he may be able to convey some sense of the particularity of the object.

In Part I, for instance, writers set about apparently simple tasks: to describe a goldfish, a landscape and the animals in it, an event, himself. But why should we assume the task is simple? Unless the student is especially gifted, he will probably find that he must look back at the object he has tried to describe. Often he will find that he has overlooked useful details; he may even discover that there are only three windows on the south wall of the men's gym, not four as on the north. Symmetry that is in the eye of the beholder indicates, not bad architecture, but perfunctory observation. Naturally, most of the time it suits our purpose to ignore details: counting the sidewalk cracks is an obsession we can afford to leave in childhood. But we learn something about the limits of language when, after looking the second time with greater care, and after revising our description, we compare our language to the object, in the company of dispassionate peers.

Through his experience of observation and revision the student learns that the "essence" of the auditorium does not exist in the vague feelings he had carelessly thrown off as his first assignment in English 1A, but in the concrete details which prompted his emotional response. This does not mean, of course, that all the student need do is list the data perceived by his senses. Experience has its own logic, even in our dreams (we shall return to this point), but it is an open question whether that logic is appropriate to the immediate problem confronting the writer. When describing the auditorium it makes no sense to toss in a fragment about the exterior, then, after dropping a comment or two about the woodwork backstage, to concentrate on the texture of the padding on the orchestra seats. The writer's point of view need not have the logic of temporal movement from front to back, or back to front, but it must have a logic recognizable also to the reader.

In each of our examples one sees that a purpose governs the movement from sentence to sentence, from paragraph to para-

In the example which opens the book, for instance, the writer describes an animate object. If we look carefully at this description, we see that it is more than details placed at random. We cannot move the sentences around within a paragraph without upsetting the useful order established within it. The pattern depends on certain spatial and temporal movements. It would be wrong to put the first sentence last (even worse to put it in the middle), for the sentence tells the reader that the object came into the gazer's view at a certain point in time. Again, once the attention of the reader has been directed to the goldfish, the writer does not shift back and forth from general to specific; instead, after making two observations about the general shape of the goldfish, he begins to discuss the parts of the fish in detail. Once he has begun a detailed description, notice how he does not shift from front to middle, to bottom, or back to the front. Instead, he helpfully begins to describe what he sees at the front, then moves feature to feature backward until he has described the tail fin. Similarly, he works in parallel descriptions of the fins on the top, bottom and sides of the fish. Having described the tail fin, the writer proceeds to describe the fish again in relation to its physical and temporal surroundings. Part of what the viewer sees is what the goldfish does. But the last sentence, while it returns to interests in the first, could not effectively be interchanged with it. The first sentence accounts for the object's coming into view, the last for the function of the parts of the object which the main portion of the paragraph had dealt with in detail.

If one's instructor asks the student to describe his own house, it is useless to protest that the instructor has never seen it; that he cannot possibly be so harsh in his criticism, especially if the description begins with the letterbox in front of the gate, moves to the incinerator in the alley, upstairs to the bedroom wallpaper, and downstairs again to the tiling on the bathroom floor. The instructor is questioning, not one's honesty or expertise, but his rhetoric. And for those who later turn in passages from their journals, such comments will be especially poignant. How can what I say be wrong if only I know that it is true? The answer always is because someone (the class, the instructor, the customer, the publisher, the voter, the jury, the reader) says so. You may know that the object you have described to your class is the pocketwatch given to you at graduation. But if the class insists that you described a ballpoint pen ("After all, you said it was small and shiny, that you take it from your pocket and use it every day"), what is an appropriate response?



## ANONYMOUS PARAGRAPH



From the mossy, green depths of the pond an oval shape flicks into the sunlight. The oblong form tapers into a narrow and slightly rounded thickness at either end of the oval, forming the body of the goldfish. A delicate layer of minute, geometrically shaped scales cover the surface of a narrow body in an alternating pattern, lending to a smooth, orange sheen. Narrowing to a point at the front of the body is the goldfish's head. Its mouth, located at the point of the head, is a small suction-type opening, which gives the appearance of a reversed smile. Now and then the goldfish darts to the surface to hang, gulping air, dimpling the water's green surface, and sending ripples to the edge of the pond. Above and just behind the mouth on either side of the head are a pair of staring, round, black eyes; these move freely in their sockets, allowing the goldfish to see in all directions. Behind each eye a thin slit opens and closes in a rhythmic motion as the fish breathes. Above the gills, on the narrowing edge of the fish's back, is a large, wing-shaped fin, which closes and opens and curves as the fish turns. On the under side of the goldfish's body are three smaller fins, two of which, located towards the fish's head, seem paired for the purpose of treading water. The bottom fin is slightly longer than the others and appears to control the fish's balance. Finally, a longer fin (shaped like a chevron) trails behind the body. All of the fins appear flexible; of a lighter color than the body, they look like layers of slightly clouded cellophane on which lines have been traced. Each line curves gently like the bent braces of a fan. The opening and closing movements of the tail fin propel the goldfish through the water in a series of swift, arcing movements, each defined by moments of hesitation, when the tail of the goldfish drapes in the water like a spreading veil.

## FIERY SERMON BY PASTOR



WILMINGTON, Del , June 23—A fiery sermon by a pastor was blamed today for the lynching last night of George White, negro, accused ravisher and murderer of Miss Helen S. Bishop.

The Rev. Robert A. Elwood, pastor of the Olivet Presbyterian church, preached a sensational sermon on the probable lynching of White last Sunday evening. The text of the sermon was widely distributed and this was believed today to have had much influence in the lynching of White which followed.

Rev. Elwood took his text from Corinthians V, 13: "Therefore put away from among ourselves that wicked person." In referring to the urgency for a speedy trial for the negro, Rev. Elwood said:

I call your special attention to that part of my text found in the constitution which says "In all criminal prosecutions the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial"

On the day of this terrible crime the officials arrested a man supposed to be guilty. He was taken before a magistrate and held without bail. Tonight he is in jail, with armed guards parading about for his protection, waiting until the middle of September. Is that speedy? Is that even constitutional?

O, honorable judges, call the court, establish a precedent, and the girls of this state, the wives of our homes and the mothers of our fireside and our beloved sisters will not be sorry and neither will you.

And honorable judges, if you do not hear and heed these appeals, and that prisoner should be taken out and lynched, then let me say to you with a full realization of the responsibility of my words, even as Nathan said to King David of old, after his soldiers had killed Uriah,

"Thou art the man," so I would say to you. The responsibility for lynching would be yours for delaying the execution of the law.

If the judges insist that the trial of the murderer of Miss Bishop be delayed until September, then should he be lynched? I say, Yes

The father of the murder victim is also a minister. Prior to the lynching, the Rev E R. Bishop had issued a letter begging the people to permit the law to take its course. Rev. Bishop's letter said

Dear Friends Mrs Bishop and our children join me in this expression of the deepest gratitude for your Christian sympathy and tender ministrations in our agonizing grief. Though comparatively strangers, you have been as dear friends whose hearts had been proved by years of acquaintance. You have helped us bear our sorrow, made hundredfold more intense by the most revolting crime. Our cup of bitterness is full and we ask you to join us in our appeal to all citizens of our commonwealth to refrain from violence. The officers believe they have all the evidence necessary to convict the prisoner, and without doubt as soon as the court can reach his case he will receive his sentence and pay the full penalty for his atrocious crime. If he can be legally tried this will be so. By all means let justice be swift, but if not, then let us wait calmly until the law in its majesty may remove the vile wretch from society.

In the meanwhile the culprit is shut up with his guilty conscience, a hell of itself, and knows he must meet the demands of law and justice with his life. Any other recourse of procedure would bring a kind of glory for those of his class, would intensify the suffering of the afflicted family, possibly endanger the life of a delicate woman, and certainly would dishonor the laws of our commonwealth. Let us not try to atone for one crime, no matter how hellish, by committing another. Sincerely yours,

E. A. Bishop.

Mrs. Bishop, mother of the murdered girl is in a state of extreme nervousness. White was put to death within a few hundred yards of the Bishop home, and the glare of the fire and howls of the mob could be plainly seen and heard at the house.

Prior to the lynching, White was incarcerated in the Newcastle County workhouse. A crowd of several hundred whites advanced into the reception hall and demanded admittance to the jail. Their demand was refused by the guards and they were deluged by a stream of water by the fire fighting equipment of the institution. This did not lessen the eagerness of the besiegers, who immediately began an assault upon the iron doors. Chief of Police Black shouted to the crowd:

"The first man that comes into this corridor will be killed."

The leader of the mob grasped one of the heavy sledgehammers and as he attacked the steel grating he cried: "Then you had better kill me for the first one."

Another man shot out the cluster of incandescent lights in the

vestibule The mob and guards exchanged shots, but did not aim at each other.

Peter Smith, a 12-year-old boy, and another youth, name not known, were wounded during the fusillade Smith was shot in the back. The bullet which struck him evidently came from a pistol in the crowd, as it is claimed by the prison warden that his guards fired over the heads of the lyncheis. Smith is not expected to live The other injured youth was shot in the nose and is expected to live.

While about 300 men and boys were storming the front of the jail several thousand sympathizers were lined up outside, and, while they took no active part in the attack, were plainly in favor of lynching White.

After forcing their way into the lower corridor on the west wing the crowd surged up to the front row of cells on the third floor. The leaders, who had the sledges and rivet cutting appliances, were calm and determined and cut straight to the cell of the man they were after. That no other doors were demolished is due to the leaders, who told Chief Black and Warden Meserve that they intended to get the negro if they had to break every steel door in the place, and argued that it was a useless expense to the county to have unnecessary damage done to property. The officials saw the strength of this argument and informed the leaders that White was in cell No 13 on the front row, third story. This was enough and the door to this row of cells was at once attacked. "This is the only door between us and our man," shouted one of the mob, "and if you will stand back we will cut it open in an hour."

It was just 22 minutes of 12 o'clock when the mob with yells, curses, and cheers rushed into the corridor past the cell doors of the frightened prisoners to the cell occupied by White. Here more trouble was encountered, for in smashing the lever box the mechanism was damaged and the door to the cell of White could not be opened.

Warden Meserve then rushed into the cell corridor to prevent the mob taking the wrong man He saw that the men with hammers were about to demolish the cell door and told them how to disconnect the door so it could be operated. As soon as the door to White's cell slid open there was a deafening cheer, and cries of "Don't hurt him; hang him; don't hit him, burn him at the stake. Take him to the place where he murdered Miss Bishop, for we have driven a stake there and will burn him."

White fought desperately for his life, and knocked down the first man who approached him. One of the leaders of the mob threw his arms around the negro, thus protecting him. At this time the narrow corridor was so tightly packed by the mob that it was impossible to get the prisoner out.

A rope was tied around his legs and he was lowered to the mob



below, who dragged him to a previously selected site at Price's Corner.

When he found that his case was hopeless the negro confessed to having committed the deed, and did not spare himself in telling of it. He prayed fervently to God and seemed anxious to do as much talking as possible in the few minutes he had to live.

Another strong rope was brought and the negro was wrapped in its coils from shoulders to feet. His lips were moving while this was going on, and he seemed to be trying to finish his statement. The crowd was in a hurry to get through with its work, and called out for the executioners to hasten. After the rope had been adjusted the negro was fastened to the stake and the torch was applied to the straw.

The flames leaped up and licked the man's bare hands. He was held erect by one of the lynchers until his clothing was burning fairly, when he was pushed into the bed of the fire. He rolled about and his contortions were terrible, but he made no sound. Suddenly the ropes on his legs parted and he sprang from the fire and started to run. A man struck him in the head with a piece of fence rail and knocked him down. Willing hands threw him again into the flames. He rolled out several times, but was promptly returned. While this was going on shouts, cheers, and gibes went up from the crowd.

When the negro had ceased to show signs of life the body was placed on its back and fuel was piled up on it, and a roaring fire was soon consuming it.

The Rev. C. H. Thomas of Belleville, Ill., speaking at Quinn chapel last night, expressed grave doubts of White's guilt.

"The only evidence against White," he said, "was the testimony of a woman that a knife found near the spot where the crime was committed had belonged to him. That is no evidence."

# ABOUT MYSELF

E. B. WHITE



I am a man of medium height. I keep my records in a Weis Folder Re-order Number 8003. The unpaid balance of my estimated tax for the year 1945 is item 3 less the sum of items 4 and 5. My eyes are gray. My Selective Service order number is 10789. The serial number is T1654. I am in Class IV-A, and have been variously in Class 3-A, Class I-A (H), and Class 4-H. My social security number is 067-01-9841. I am married to U.S. Woman Number 067-01-9807. Her eyes are gray. This is not a joint declaration, nor is it made by an agent; therefore it need be signed only by me—and, as I said, I am a man of medium height.

I am the holder of a quit-claim deed recorded in Book 682, Page 501, in the county where I live. I hold Fire Insurance Policy Number 424747, continuing until the 23 day of October in the year nineteen hundred forty-five, at noon, and it is important that the written portions of all policies covering the same property read exactly alike. My cervical spine shows relatively good alignment with evidence of proliferative changes about the bodies consistent with early arthritis. (Essential clinical data: pain in neck radiating to mastoids and occipito-temporal region, not constant, moderately severe; patient in good general health and working ) My operator's license is Number 16200. It expired December 31, 1943, more than a year ago, but I am still carrying it and it appears to be serving the purpose. I shall renew it when I get time. I have made, published, and declared my last

E. B. White, from *The Second Tree from the Corner*. Copyright 1945 by E. B. White. Originally appeared in *The New Yorker*. Reprinted by permission of Harper & Row, Publishers.

will and testament, and it thereby revokes all other wills and codicils at any time heretofore made by me. I hold Basic A Mileage Ration 108950, O.P.A. Form R-525-C The number of my car is 18-388 Tickets A-14 are valid through March 21st

I was born in District Number 5903, New York State. My birth is registered in Volume 3/58 of the Department of Health My father was a man of medium height His telephone number was 484. My mother was a housewife Her eyes were blue Neither parent had a social security number and neither was secure socially They drove to the depot behind an unnumbered horse

I hold Individual Certificate Number 4320-209 with the Equitable Life Assurance Society, in which a corporation hereinafter called the employer has contracted to insure my life for the sum of two thousand dollars My left front tire is Number 48KE8846, my right front tire is Number 63T6895 My rear tires are, from left to right, Number 6N4M5384 and Number A26E5806D. I brush my hair with Whiting-Adams Brush Number 010 and comb my hair with Pro-Phy-Lac-Tic Comb Number 1201. My shaving brush is sterilized I take Pill Number 43934 after each meal and I can get more of them by calling ELdorado 5-6770. I spray my nose with De Vilbiss Atomizer Number 14 Sometimes I stop the pain with Squibb Pill, Control Number 3K49979 (aspirin). My wife (Number 067-01-9807) takes Pill Number 49345.

I hold War Ration Book 40289EW, from which have been torn Airplane Stamps Numbers 1, 2, and 3 I also hold Book 159378CD, from which have been torn Spare Number 2, Spare Number 37, and certain other coupons My wife holds Book 40288EW and Book 159374CD In accepting them, she recognized that they remained the property of the United States Government.

I have a black dog with cheeks of tan. Her number is 11032 It is an old number. I shall renew it when I get time. The analysis of her prepared food is guaranteed and is Case Number 1312. The ingredients are Cereal Flaked feeds (from Corn, Rice, Bran, and Wheat), Meat Meal, Fish Liver and Glandular Meal, Soybean Oil Meal, Wheat Bran, Corn Germ Meal, 5% Kel-Centrane [containing Dried Skim Milk, Dehydrated Cheese, Vitamin B<sub>1</sub> (Thiamin), Flavin Concentrate, Carotene, Yeast, Vitamin A and D Feeding Oil (containing 3,000 U.S.P. units Vitamin A and 400 U.S.P. units Vitamin D per gram), Diastase (Enzyme), Wheat Germ Meal, Rice Polish Extract], 1½% Calcium Carbonate, .00037% Potassium Iodide, and ¼% Salt She prefers offal.

When I finish what I am now writing it will be late in the day. It will be about half past five I will then take up Purchase Order Number 245-9077-B-Final, which I received this morning from the Office of War Information and which covers the use of certain mate-

rial they want to translate into a foreign language. Attached to the order are Standard Form Number 1034 (white) and three copies of Standard Form Number 1034a (yellow), also "Instructions for Preparation of Voucher by Vendor and Example of Prepared Voucher." The Appropriation Symbol of the Purchase Order is 1153700.001-501. The requisition number is B-827. The allotment is X5-207.1-R2-11. Voucher shall be prepared in ink, indelible pencil, or typewriter. For a while I will be vendor preparing voucher. Later on, when my head gets bad and the pain radiates, I will be voucher preparing vendor. I see that there is a list of twenty-one instructions which I will be following. Number One on the list is. "Name of payor agency as shown in the block 'appropriation symbol and title' in the upper left-hand corner of the Purchase Order." Number Five on the list is. "Vendor's personal account or invoice number," but whether that means Order Number 245-9077-B-Final, or Requisition B-827, or Allotment X5-207.1-R2-11, or Appropriation Symbol 1153700 001-501, I do not know, nor will I know later on in the evening after several hours of meditation, nor will I be able to find out by consulting Woman 067-01-9807, who is no better at filling out forms than I am, nor after taking Pill Number 43934, which tends merely to make me drowsy.

I owe a letter to Corporal 32413654, Hq and Hq Sq., VII AAF S.C., APO 953, c/o PM San Francisco, Calif., thanking him for the necktie he sent me at Christmas. In 1918 I was a private in the Army. My number was 4,345,016 I was a boy of medium height. I had light hair. I had no absences from duty under G.O. 31, 1912, or G.O. 45, 1914. The number of that war was Number One

## "BEAUTY"

CHARLES DARWIN



Having made these preliminary remarks on the admiration felt by savages for various ornaments, and for deformities most unsightly in our eyes, let us see how far the men are attracted by the appearance of their women, and what are their ideas of beauty. As I have heard it maintained that savages are quite indifferent about the beauty of their women, valuing them solely as slaves, it may be well to observe that this conclusion does not at all agree with the care which the women take in ornamenting themselves, or with their vanity. Burchell gives an amusing account of a Bush-woman, who used so much grease, red ochre, and shining powder, "as would have ruined any but a very rich husband." She displayed also "much vanity and too evident a consciousness of her superiority" Mr. Winwood Reade informs me that the negroes of the West Coast often discuss the beauty of their women. Some competent observers have attributed the fearfully common practice of infanticide partly to the desire felt by the women to retain their good looks. In several regions the women wear charms and love-philters to gain the affections of the men; and Mr. Brown enumerates four plants used for this purpose by the women of North-Western America.

Hearne, who lived many years with the American Indians, and who was an excellent observer, says, in speaking of the women, "Ask a Northern Indian what is beauty, and he will answer, a broad flat face, small eyes, high cheek-bones, three or four broad black lines across each cheek, a low forehead, a large broad chin, a clumsy hook

Charles Darwin, from *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex*, London: John Murray, 1871.

nose, a tawny hide, and breasts hanging down to the belt." Pallas, who visited the northern parts of the Chinese empire, says "those women are preferred who have the Mandschú form; that is to say, a broad face, high cheek-bones, very broad noses, and enormous ears", and Vogt remarks that the obliquity of the eye, which is proper to the Chinese and Japanese, is exaggerated in their pictures for the purpose, as "it seems, of exhibiting its beauty, as contrasted with the eye of the red-haired barbarians." It is well known, as Huc repeatedly remarks, that the Chinese of the interior think Europeans hideous with their white skins and prominent noses. The nose is far from being too prominent, according to our ideas, in the natives of Ceylon, yet "the Chinese in the seventh century, accustomed to the flat features of the Mogul races, were surprised at the prominent noses of the Cingalese; and Thsang described them as having 'the beak of a bird, with the body of a man'."

Finlayson, after minutely describing the people of Cochin China, says that their rounded heads and faces are their chief characteristics, and he adds, "the roundness of the whole countenance is more striking in the women, who are reckoned beautiful in proportion as they display this form of face." The Siamese have small noses with divergent nostrils, a wide mouth, rather thick lips, a remarkably large face, with very high and broad cheek-bones. It is, therefore, not wonderful that "beauty, according to our notion is a stranger to them. Yet they consider their own females to be much more beautiful than those of Europe."

It is well known that with many Hottentot women the posterior part of the body projects in a wonderful manner, they are steatopygous; and Sir Andrew Smith is certain that this peculiarity is greatly admired by the men. He once saw a woman who was considered a beauty, and she was so immensely developed behind, that when seated on level ground she could not rise, and had to push herself along until she came to a slope. Some of the women in various negro tribes are similarly characterised, and, according to Burton, the Somal men "are said to choose their wives by ranging them in a line, and by picking her out who projects farthest *a tergo*. Nothing can be more hateful to a negro than the opposite form."

With respect to colour, the negroes rallied Mungo Park on the whiteness of his skin and the prominence of his nose, both of which they considered as "unsightly and unnatural conformations." He in return praised the glossy jet of their skins and the lovely depression of their noses, this they said was "honey-mouth," nevertheless they gave him food. The African Moors, also, "knitted their brows and seemed to shudder" at the whiteness of his skin. On the eastern coast, the negro boys when they saw Burton, cried out "Look at the white man; does he not look like a white ape?" On the western coast, as

Mr. Winwood Reade informs me, the negroes admire a very black skin more than one of a lighter tint. But their horror of whiteness may be partly attributed, according to this same traveller, to the belief held by most negroes that demons and spirits are white.

The Banyai of the more southern part of the continent are negroes, but "a great many of them are of a light coffee-and-milk colour, and, indeed, this colour is considered handsome throughout the whole country", so that here we have a different standard of taste. With the Kafirs, who differ much from negroes,

the skin, except among the tribes near Delagoa Bay, is not usually black, the prevailing colour being a mixture of black and red, the most common shade being chocolate. Dark complexions, as being most common are naturally held in the highest esteem. To be told that he is light-coloured, or like a white man, would be deemed a very poor compliment by a Kafir. I have heard of one unfortunate man who was so very fair that no girl would marry him.

One of the titles of the Zulu king is "You who are black." Mr Galton, in speaking to me about the natives of S. Africa, remarked that their ideas of beauty seem very different from ours, for in one tribe two slim, slight, and pretty girls were not admired by the natives.

Turning to other quarters of the world; in Java, a yellow, not a white girl, is considered, according to Madame Pfeiffer, a beauty. A man of Cochinchina "spoke with contempt of the wife of the English Ambassador, that she had white teeth like a dog, and a rosy colour like that of potato-flowers." We have seen that the Chinese dislike our white skin, and that N. Americans admire "a tawny hide." In S. America, the Yura-caras, who inhabit the wooded, damp slopes of the eastern Cordillera, are remarkably pale-coloured, as their name in their own language expresses, nevertheless they consider European women as very inferior to their own.

In several of the tribes of North America the hair on the head grows to a wonderful length; and Catlin gives a curious proof how much this is esteemed, for the chief of the Crows was elected to this office from having the longest hair of any man in the tribe, namely ten feet and seven inches. The Aymaras and Quichuas of S. America, likewise have very long hair, and this, as Mr. D. Forbes informs me, is so much valued for the sake of beauty, that cutting it off was the severest punishment which he could inflict on them. In both halves of the continent the natives sometimes increase the apparent length of their hair by weaving into it fibrous substances. Although the hair on the head is thus cherished, that on the face is considered by the North American Indians "as very vulgar," and every hair is carefully eradicated. This practice prevails throughout the American continent from Vancouver's Island in the north to Tierra del Fuego in the south.

When York Minster, a Fuegian on board the *Beagle* was taken back to his country, the natives told him he ought to pull out the few short hairs on his face. They also threatened a young missionary, who was left for a time with them, to strip him naked, and pluck the hairs from his face and body, yet he was far from a hairy man. This fashion is carried to such an extreme that the Indians of Paraguay eradicate their eyebrows and eyelashes, saying that they do not wish to be like horses.

It is remarkable that throughout the world the races which are almost completely destitute of a beard dislike hairs on the face and body, and take pains to eradicate them. The Kalmucks are beardless, and they are well known, like the Americans, to pluck out all straggling hairs, and so it is with the Polynesians, some of the Malays, and the Siamese. Mr. Veitch states that the Japanese ladies "all objected to our whiskers, considering them very ugly, and told us to cut them off, and be like Japanese men." The New Zealanders are beardless; they carefully pluck out the hairs on the face, and have a saying that "There is no woman for a hairy man."

On the other hand, bearded races admire and greatly value their beards, among the Anglo-Saxons every part of the body, according to their laws, had a recognised value; "the loss of a beard being estimated at twenty shillings, while the breaking of a thigh was fixed at only twelve." In the East men swear solemnly by their beards. We have seen that Chinsurdi, the chief of the Makalolo in Africa, evidently thought that beards were a great ornament. With the Fijians in the Pacific the beard is "profuse and bushy, and is his greatest pride", whilst the inhabitants of the adjacent archipelagoes of Tonga and Samoa are "beardless, and abhor a rough chin." In one island alone of the Ellice group "the men are heavily bearded, and not a little proud thereof."

We thus see how widely the different races of man differ in their taste for the beautiful. In every nation sufficiently advanced to have made effigies of their gods or of their deified rulers, the sculptors no doubt have endeavoured to express their highest ideal of beauty and grandeur. Under this point of view it is well to compare in our mind the Jupiter or Apollo of the Greeks with the Egyptian or Assyrian statues, and these with the hideous bas-reliefs on the ruined buildings of Central America.

I have met with very few statements opposed to the above conclusion. Mr. Winwood Reade, however, who has had ample opportunities for observation, not only with the negroes of the West Coast of Africa, but with those of the interior who have never associated with Europeans, is convinced that their ideas of beauty are *on the whole* the same as ours. He has repeatedly found that he agreed with negroes in their estimation of the beauty of the native girls; and



that their appreciation of the beauty of European women corresponded with ours. They admire long hair, and use artificial means to make it appear abundant, they admire also a beard, though themselves very scantily provided. Mr. Reade feels doubtful what kind of nose is most appreciated—a girl has been heard to say, “I do not want to marry him, he has got no nose”, and this shews that a very flat nose is not an object of admiration. We should, however, bear in mind that the depressed and very broad noses and projecting jaws of the negroes of the West Coast are exceptional types with the inhabitants of Africa. Notwithstanding the foregoing statements, Mr. Reade does not think it probable that negroes would ever prefer the “most beautiful European woman, on the mere grounds of physical admiration, to a good-looking negress”.

The truth of the principle, long ago insisted on by Humboldt, that man admires and often tries to exaggerate whatever characters nature may have given him, is shewn in many ways. The practice of beardless races extirpating every trace of a beard, and generally all the hairs on the body, offers one illustration. The skull has been greatly modified during ancient and modern times by many nations, and there can be little doubt that this has been practised, especially in N. and S. America, in order to exaggerate some natural and admired peculiarity. Many American Indians are known to admire a head flattened to such an extreme degree as to appear to us like that of an idiot. The natives on the northwestern coast compress the head into a pointed cone, and it is their constant practice to gather the hair into a knot on the top of the head, for the sake, as Dr. Wilson remarks, “of increasing the apparent elevation of the favourite conoid form.” The inhabitants of Arakhan “admire a broad, smooth forehead, and in order to produce it, they fasten a plate of lead on the heads of the new-born children.” On the other hand, “a broad, well-rounded occiput is considered a great beauty” by the natives of the Fiji islands.

As with the skull, so with the nose, the ancient Huns during the age of Attila were accustomed to flatten the noses of their infants with bandages, “for the sake of exaggerating a natural conformation.” With the Tahitians, to be called *long-nose* is considered as an insult, and they compress the noses and foreheads of their children for the sake of beauty. So it is with the Malays of Sumatra, the Hottentots, certain Negroes, and the natives of Brazil. The Chinese have by nature unusually small feet, and it is well known that the women of the upper class distort their feet to make them still smaller. Lastly, Humboldt thinks that the American Indians prefer colouring their bodies with red paint in order to exaggerate their natural tint, and until recently European women added to their naturally bright colours by rouge and white cosmetics, but I doubt whether many barbarous nations have had any such intention in painting themselves.

In the fashions of our own dress we see exactly the same principle and the same desire to carry every point to an extreme, we exhibit, also, the same spirit of emulation. But the fashions of savages are far more permanent than ours; and whenever their bodies are artificially modified this is necessarily the case. The Arab women of the Upper Nile occupy about three days in dressing their hair, they never imitate other tribes, "but simply vie with each other in the superlativeness of their own style." Dr. Wilson, in speaking of the compressed skulls of various American races, adds, "such usages are among the least eradicable, and long survive the shock of revolutions that change dynasties and efface more important national peculiarities." The same principle comes largely into play in the art of selection; and we can thus understand, as I have elsewhere explained, the wonderful development of all the races of animals and plants which are kept merely for ornament. Fanciers always wish each character to be somewhat increased; they do not admire a medium standard; they certainly do not desire any great and abrupt change in the character of their breeds; they admire solely what they are accustomed to behold, but they ardently desire to see each characteristic feature a little more developed.

No doubt the perceptive powers of man and the lower animals are so constituted that brilliant colours and certain forms, as well as harmonious and rhythmical sounds, give pleasure and are called beautiful, but why this should be so, we know no more than why certain bodily sensations are agreeable and others disagreeable. It is certainly not true that there is in the mind of man any universal standard of beauty with respect to the human body. It is, however, possible that certain tastes may in the course of time become inherited, though I know of no evidence in favour of this belief, and if so, each race would possess its own innate ideal standard of beauty. It has been argued that ugliness consists in an approach to the structure of the lower animals, and this no doubt is true with the more civilised nations, in which intellect is highly appreciated; but a nose twice as prominent, or eyes twice as large as usual, would not be an approach in structure to any of the lower animals, and yet would be utterly hideous. The men of each race prefer what they are accustomed to behold; they cannot endure any great change; but they like variety, and admire each characteristic point carried to a moderate extreme. Men accustomed to a nearly oval face, to straight and regular features, and to bright colours, admire, as we Europeans know, these points when strongly developed. On the other hand, men accustomed to a broad face, with high cheek-bones, a depressed nose, and a black skin, admire these points strongly developed. No doubt characters of all kinds may easily be too much developed for beauty. Hence a perfect beauty, which implies many characters modified in a particular manner, will in every race be a prodigy. As the great anatomist Bichat

long ago said, if every one were cast in the same mould, there would be no such thing as beauty. If all our women were to become as beautiful as the Venus de Medici, we should for a time be charmed; but we should soon wish for variety, and as soon as we had obtained variety, we should wish to see certain characters in our women a little exaggerated beyond the then existing common standard.

# WINTER ANIMALS

HENRY DAVID THOREAU



When the ponds were firmly frozen, they afforded not only new and shorter routes to many points, but new views from their surfaces of the familiar landscape around them. When I crossed Flint's Pond, after it was covered with snow, though I had often paddled about and skated over it, it was so unexpectedly wide and so strange that I could think of nothing but Baffin's Bay. The Lincoln hills rose up around me at the extremity of a snowy plain, in which I did not remember to have stood before; and the fishermen, at an indeterminable distance over the ice, moving slowly about with their wolfish dogs, passed for sealers or Esquimaux, or in misty weather loomed like fabulous creatures, and I did not know whether they were giants or pygmies. I took this course when I went to lecture in Lincoln in the evening, travelling in no road and passing no house between my own hut and the lecture room. In Goose Pond, which lay in my way, a colony of muskrats dwelt, and raised their cabins high above the ice, though none could be seen abroad when I crossed it. Walden, being like the rest usually bare of snow, or with only shallow and interrupted drifts on it, was my yard where I could walk freely when the snow was nearly two feet deep on a level elsewhere and the villagers were confined to their streets. There, far from the village street, and except at very long intervals, from the jingle of sleigh-bells, I slid and skated, as in a vast moose-yard well trodden, overhung by oak woods and solemn pines bent down with snow or bristling with icicles.

For sounds in winter nights, and often in winter days, I heard

Henry David Thoreau, from *Walden*. Copyright © 1893 by Houghton Mifflin, Co.

the forlorn but melodious note of a hooting owl indefinitely far, such a sound as the frozen earth would yield if struck with a suitable plectrum, the very *lingua vernacula* of Walden Wood, and quite familiar to me at last, though I never saw the bird while it was making it. I seldom opened my door in a winter evening without hearing it; *Hoo hoo hoo*, *hoorer hoo*, sounded sonorously, and the first three syllables accented somewhat like *how der do*; or sometimes *hoo hoo* only. One night in the beginning of winter, before the pond froze over, about nine o'clock, I was startled by the loud honking of a goose, and, stepping to the door, heard the sound of their wings like a tempest in the woods as they flew low over my house. They passed over the pond toward Fair Haven, seemingly deterred from settling by my light, their commodore honking all the while with a regular beat. Suddenly an unmistakable cat owl from very near me, with the most harsh and tremendous voice I ever heard from any inhabitant of the woods, responded at regular intervals to the goose, as if determined to expose and disgrace this intruder from Hudson's Bay by exhibiting a greater compass and volume of voice in a native, and *boo-hoo* him out of Concord horizon. What do you mean by alarming the citadel at this time of night consecrated to me? Do you think I am ever caught napping at such an hour, and that I have not got lungs and a larynx as well as yourself? *Boo-hoo, boo-hoo, boo-hoo!* It was one of the most thrilling discords I ever heard. And yet, if you had a discriminating ear, there were in it the elements of a concord such as these plains never saw nor heard.

I also heard the whooping of the ice in the pond, my great bed-fellow in that part of Concord, as if it were restless in its bed and would fain turn over, were troubled with flatulency and bad dreams; or I was waked by the cracking of the ground by the frost, as if some one had driven a team against my door, and in the morning would find a crack in the earth a quarter of a mile long and a third of an inch wide.

Sometimes I heard the foxes as they ranged over the snow-crust, in moonlight nights, in search of a partridge or other game, barking raggedly and demoniacally like forest dogs, as if laboring with some anxiety, or seeking expression, struggling for light and to be dogs outright and run freely in the streets, for if we take the ages into our account, may there not be a civilization going on among brutes as well as men? They seemed to me to be rudimental, burrowing men, still standing on their defence, awaiting their transformation. Sometimes one came near to my window, attracted by my light, barked a vulpine curse at me, and then retreated.

Usually the red squirrel (*Sciurus Hudsonius*) waked me in the dawn, coursing over the roof and up and down the sides of the house, as if sent out of the woods for this purpose. In the course of the

winter I threw out half a bushel of ears of sweet corn, which had not got ripe, on to the snow-crust by my door, and was amused by watching the motions of the various animals which were baited by it. In the twilight and the night the rabbits came regularly and made a hearty meal. All day long the red squirrels came and went, and afforded me much entertainment by their manœuvres. One would approach at first warily through the shrub oaks, running over the snow-crust by fits and starts like a leaf blown by the wind, now a few paces this way, with wonderful speed and waste of energy, making inconceivable haste with his "trotters," as if it were for a wager, and now as many paces that way, but never getting on more than half a rod at a time, and then suddenly pausing with a ludicrous expression and a gratuitous somerset, as if all the eyes in the universe were fixed on him,—for all the motions of a squirrel, even in the most solitary recesses of the forest, imply spectators as much as those of a dancing girl,—wasting more time in delay and circumspection than would have sufficed to walk the whole distance,—I never saw one walk,—and then suddenly, before you could say Jack Robinson, he would be in the top of a young pitch pine, winding up his clock and chiding all imaginary spectators, soliloquizing and talking to all the universe at the same time,—for no reason that I could ever detect, or he himself was aware of, I suspect. At length he would reach the corn, and selecting a suitable ear, frisk about in the same uncertain trigonometrical way to the topmost stick of my wood-pile, before my window, where he looked me in the face, and there sit for hours, supplying himself with a new ear from time to time, nibbling at first voraciously and throwing the half-naked cobs about; till at length he grew more dainty still and played with his food, tasting only the inside of the kernel, and the ear, which was held balanced over the stick by one paw, slipped from his careless grasp and fell to the ground, when he would look over at it with a ludicrous expression of uncertainty, as if suspecting that it had life, with a mind not made up whether to get it again, or a new one, or be off, now thinking of corn, then listening to hear what was in the wind. So the little impudent fellow would waste many an ear in a forenoon; till at last, seizing some longer and plumper one, considerably bigger than himself, and skilfully balancing it, he would set out with it to the woods, like a tiger with a buffalo, by the same zigzag course and frequent pauses, scratching along with it as if it were too heavy for him and falling all the while, making its fall a diagonal between a perpendicular and horizontal, being determined to put it through at any rate;—a singularly frivolous and whimsical fellow;—and so he would get off with it to where he lived, perhaps carry it to the top of a pine tree forty or fifty rods distant, and I would afterwards find the cobs strewn about the woods in various directions.

At length the jays arrive, whose discordant screams were heard long before, as they were warily making their approach an eighth of a mile off, and in a stealthy and sneaking manner they flit from tree to tree, nearer and nearer, and pick up the kernels which the squirrels have dropped. Then, sitting on a pitch pine bough, they attempt to swallow in their haste a kernel which is too big for their throats and chokes them, and after great labor they disgorge it, and spend an hour in the endeavor to crack it by repeated blows with their bills. They were manifestly thieves, and I had not much respect for them, but the squirrels, though at first shy, went to work as if they were taking what was their own.

Meanwhile also came the chickadees in flocks, which, picking up the crumbs the squirrels had dropped, flew to the nearest twig, and, placing them under their claws, hammered away at them with their little bills, as if it were an insect in the bark, till they were sufficiently reduced for their slender throats. A little flock of these titmice came daily to pick a dinner out of my wood-pile, or the crumbs at my door, with faint flitting lispings notes, like the tinkling of icicles in the grass, or else with sprightly *day day day*, or more rarely, in spring-like days, a wiry summery *phe-be* from the woodside. They were so familiar that at length one alighted on an armful of wood which I was carrying in, and pecked at the sticks without fear. I once had a sparrow alight upon my shoulder for a moment while I was hoeing in a village garden, and I felt that I was more distinguished by that circumstance than I should have been by any epaulet I could have worn. The squirrels also grew at last to be quite familiar, and occasionally stepped upon my shoe, when that was the nearest way.

When the ground was not yet quite covered, and again near the end of winter, when the snow was melted on my south hillside and about my wood-pile, the partridges came out of the woods morning and evening to feed there. Whichever side you walk in the woods the partridge bursts away on whirring wings, jarring the snow from the dry leaves and twigs on high, which comes sifting down in the sunbeams like golden dust, for this brave bird is not to be scared by winter. It is frequently covered up by drifts, and, it is said, "sometimes plunges from on wing into the soft snow, where it remains concealed for a day or two." I used to start them in the open land also, where they had come out of the woods at sunset to "bud" the wild apple trees. They will come regularly every evening to particular trees, where the cunning sportsman lies in wait for them, and the distant orchards next the woods suffer thus not a little. I am glad that the partridge gets fed, at any rate. It is Nature's own bird which lives on buds and diet-drink.

In dark winter mornings, or in short winter afternoons, I sometimes heard a pack of hounds threading all the woods with hounding

cry and yelp, unable to resist the instinct of the chase, and the note of the hunting-horn at intervals, proving that man was in the rear. The woods ring again, and yet no fox bursts forth on to the open level of the pond, nor following pack pursuing their Actæon. And perhaps at evening I see the hunters returning with a single brush trailing from their sleigh for a trophy, seeking their inn. They tell me that if the fox would remain in the bosom of the frozen earth he would be safe, or if he would run in a straight line away no foxhound could overtake him; but, having left his pursuers far behind, he stops to rest and listen till they come up, and when he runs he circles round to his old haunts, where the hunters await him. Sometimes, however, he will run upon a wall many rods, and then leap off far to one side, and he appears to know that water will not retain his scent. A hunter told me that he once saw a fox pursued by hounds burst out on to Walden when the ice was covered with shallow puddles, run part way across, and then return to the same shore. Ere long the hounds arrived, but here they lost the scent. Sometimes a pack hunting by themselves would pass my door, and circle round my house, and yelp and hound without regarding me, as if afflicted by a species of madness, so that nothing could divert them from the pursuit. Thus they circle until they fall upon the recent trail of a fox, for a wise hound will forsake everything else for this. One day a man came to my hut from Lexington to inquire after his hound that made a large track, and had been hunting for a week by himself. But I fear that he was not the wiser for all I told him, for every time I attempted to answer his questions he interrupted me by asking, "What do you do here?" He had lost a dog, but found a man.

One old hunter who has a dry tongue, who used to come to bathe in Walden once every year when the water was warmest, and at such times looked in upon me, told me that many years ago he took his gun one afternoon and went out for a cruise in Walden Wood; and as he walked the Wayland road he heard the cry of hounds approaching, and ere long a fox leaped the wall into the road, and as quick as thought leaped the other wall out of the road, and his swift bullet had not touched him. Some way behind came an old hound and her three pups in full pursuit, hunting on their own account, and disappeared again in the woods. Late in the afternoon, as he was resting in the thick woods south of Walden, he heard the voice of the hounds far over toward Fair Haven still pursuing the fox; and on they came, their hounding cry which made all the woods ring sounding nearer and nearer, now from Well Meadow, now from the Baker Farm. For a long time he stood still and listened to their music, so sweet to a hunter's ear, when suddenly the fox appeared, threading the solemn aisles with an easy coursing pace, whose sound was concealed by a sympathetic rustle of the leaves, swift and still, keeping



the ground, leaving his pursuers far behind, and, leaping upon a rock amid the woods, he sat erect and listening, with his back to the hunter. For a moment compassion restrained the latter's arm, but that was a short-lived mood, and as quick as thought can follow thought his piece was levelled, and *whang!*—the fox rolling over the rock lay dead on the ground. The hunter still kept his place and listened to the hounds. Still on they came, and now the near woods resounded through all their aisles with their demoniac cry. At length the old hound burst into view with muzzle to the ground, and snapping the air as if possessed, and ran directly to the rock, but spying the dead fox she suddenly ceased her hounding, as if struck dumb with amazement, and walked round and round him in silence, and one by one her pups arrived, and, like their mother, were sobered into silence by the mystery. Then the hunter came forward and stood in their midst, and the mystery was solved. They waited in silence while he skinned the fox, then followed the brush a while, and at length turned off into the woods again. That evening a Weston squire came to the Concord hunter's cottage to inquire for his hounds, and told how for a week they had been hunting on their own account from Weston woods. The Concord hunter told him what he knew and offered him the skin, but the other declined it and departed. He did not find his hounds that night, but the next day learned that they had crossed the river and put up at a farmhouse for the night, whence, having been well fed, they took their departure early in the morning.

The hunter who told me this could remember one Sam Nutting, who used to hunt bears on Fair Haven Ledges, and exchange their skins for rum in Concord village, who told him, even, that he had seen a moose there. Nutting had a famous foxhound named Burgoyne, —he pronounced it Bugine,—which my informant used to borrow. In the "Wast Book" of an old trader of this town, who was also a captain, town-clerk, and representative, I find the following entry. Jan. 18th, 1742-3, "John Melven Cr. by 1 Grey Fox 0-2-3;" they are not now found here; and in his ledger, Feb. 7th, 1743, Hezekiah Stratton has credit "by  $\frac{1}{2}$  a Catt skin 0-1-4 $\frac{1}{2}$ "; of course, a wild-cat, for Stratton was a sergeant in the old French war, and would not have got credit for hunting less noble game. Credit is given for deerskins also, and they were daily sold. One man still preserves the horns of the last deer that was killed in this vicinity, and another has told me the particulars of the hunt in which his uncle was engaged. The hunters were formerly a numerous and merry crew here. I remember well one gaunt Nimrod who would catch up a leaf by the roadside and play a strain on it wilder and more melodious, if my memory serves me, than any hunting-horn.

At midnight, when there was a moon, I sometimes met with hounds in my path prowling about the woods, which would skulk out

of my way, as if afraid, and stand silent amid the bushes till I had passed.

Squirrels and wild mice disputed for my store of nuts. There were scores of pitch pines around my house, from one to four inches in diameter, which had been gnawed by mice the previous winter,—a Norwegian winter for them, for the snow lay long and deep, and they were obliged to mix a large proportion of pine bark with their other diet. These trees were alive and apparently flourishing at mid-summer, and many of them had grown a foot, though completely girdled; but after another winter such were without exception dead. It is remarkable that a single mouse should thus be allowed a whole pine tree for its dinner, gnawing round instead of up and down it; but perhaps it is necessary in order to thin these trees, which are wont to grow up densely.

The hares (*Lepus Americanus*) were very familiar. One had her form under my house all winter, separated from me only by the flooring, and she startled me each morning by her hasty departure when I began to stir,—thump, thump, thump, striking her head against the floor timbers in her hurry. They used to come round my door at dusk to nibble the potato parings which I had thrown out, and were so nearly the color of the ground that they could hardly be distinguished when still. Sometimes in the twilight I alternately lost and recovered sight of one sitting motionless under my window. When I opened my door in the evening, off they would go with a squeak and a bounce. Near at hand they only excited my pity. One evening one sat by my door two paces from me, at first trembling with fear, yet unwilling to move; a poor wee thing, lean and bony, with ragged ears and sharp nose, scant tail and slender paws. It looked as if Nature no longer contained the breed of nobler bloods, but stood on her last toes. Its large eyes appeared young and unhealthy, almost dropsical. I took a step, and lo, away it scud with an elastic spring over the snow-crust, straightening its body and its limbs into graceful length, and soon put the forest between me and itself,—the wild free venison, asserting its vigor and the dignity of Nature. Not without reason was its slenderness. Such then was its nature. (*Lepus, levipes, lightfoot, some think.*)

What is a country without rabbits and partridges? They are among the most simple and indigenous animal products; ancient and venerable families known to antiquity as to modern times; of the very hue and substance of Nature, nearest allied to leaves and to the ground,—and to one another; it is either winged or it is legged. It is hardly as if you had seen a wild creature when a rabbit or a partridge bursts away, only a natural one, as much to be expected as rustling leaves. The partridge and the rabbit are still sure to thrive, like true natives of the soil, whatever revolutions occur. If the forest is cut off, the

sprouts and bushes which spring up afford them concealment, and they become more numerous than ever. That must be a poor country indeed that does not support a hare. Our woods teem with them both, and around every swamp may be seen the partridge or rabbit walk, beset with twiggy fences and horse-hair snares, which some cow-boy tends.



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## *PART II*

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# ***EXPERIENCE AND DESCRIPTION: THE NARRATIVE MODE***

The student is ahead of the game if he recognizes that the **notion** of “pure description,” not the experience of reading description (not the descriptive passage itself), is abstract. Descriptive writing is writing with a particular emphasis, one that appears deceptively simple. The beginner must try hard not only to say what he means, but to concentrate on the details of his experience in order to emphasize the points most useful to his purpose. Even then, he may recognize that language does not always adequately convey the visual sense he wishes; at times it is helpful simply to point:

"Here, this is what I mean by Crescent wrench." But attempting to describe physical objects and to record events is helpful in suggesting the limitations of language. The idea that language as we ordinarily think of it is a perfect instrument to convey to a hearer the details of a visual memory is not very sound. It is like the notion of "objectivity," which frequently misleads people into useless controversy over what the criterion of a neutral observer would be. The point remains that natural language (which is what all of us speak) is not like "constructed languages," such as mathematics. The latter, since they make no attempt to convey the sense apprehensions of a seer, mean the same thing to most users. Yet even mathematical truths, when employed in social contexts, may transmit profoundly personal psychological states of mind. "Two plus two equals **four!**" might mean, "You thief, what happened to the other dollar?"

Think of the simplest descriptive example we have read—that of the goldfish. Here, words like "delicate," and "fine," and "veil," though intended to convey the physical particularity of an object existing in the outside world, nevertheless carry with them overtones of the speaker's positive feelings. The comparison of the tail fin to a veil, for instance, means partly that the writer finds in nature something akin to the beauty of man's own handiwork. The words convey not only descriptive details, but emotive associations of the author.

Despite whatever emotional coloring we find, the emphasis in Part I was on description. In the following group of examples, the descriptive details, while important, are subordinated to allow not the scene but the narrator to provide the organizing pattern of the experience. Whereas the method of the paragraph on the goldfish involved movement from top to bottom, from front to back, in this Part, details are manipulated along with the events of seeing in order that the writer might convey valuable perspective on his experience.

However, there is nothing intrinsically new about this; aspects of this technique appear in the first part. Indeed, wherever one finds the use of a verb tense, there will be some element of narrative: "On December 7, 1941, . . ."; ". . . an oval shape flicks . . ."; ". . . he sprang from the fire and started to run." But when D. H. Lawrence describes the terrain of New Mexico, he tells us at least as much about Lawrence as he does about the desert landscape. This is like saying that under certain circumstances the value of a goldfish as an object of contemplation to a single individual might prove to be of greater worth than the factual style of the narrative might lead us to suppose.

The point made here will be useful later on. One possible difference in emphasis appears in the interest of the author in the outer **structure** of the physical world as distinct from the inner

**structuring** quality of his experience. The latter imposes on the hypothetical “reality” structure a quantum of personal perspective. Experience and description emphasize the narrative mode; the passages that follow may remind the reader of his own attempts to keep a journal. Further, they should suggest that not all journal entries are equally successful. A good exercise for the beginning writer is to revise his journal entries by expanding a single sentence into a full-length essay. In the last exercises we became aware of the eloquence of the factual technique, despite its conciseness in form, if, now, one sentence may be almost limitlessly expanded, we can experience the great flexibility and elasticity of language. It is possible that more and more details make an experience more and more concrete: in this revised entry another line could be selected, and expanded into another essay. Thus, the exercise can be repeated any number of times.

The example from Darwin indicated how observation can be used as part of a larger plan. In his role as scientist, Darwin piles up visual and historic details. He tells us what certain people look like and what certain people said. But of course the “facts” (“It is well known that with many Hottentot women . . .”) are used to elucidate a feeling or belief:

The truth of the principle, long ago insisted on by Humboldt, that man admires and often tries to exaggerate whatever characters nature may have given him, is shewn in many ways.

This doesn't mean that Darwin's observations lack validity; quite the opposite, many a scientific report would be improved by the direct, concrete use of language found here. But the emphasis in Part I was on details, descriptive details; and the success of Darwin's larger argument stands or falls on the effectiveness of these details.

In contrast, as we see in “Where I lived and what I lived for,” descriptive details—the landscape and the Hollowell farm—become part of Thoreau's unfolding of his own perspective on experience. He depends on narrative to depict his movement about the terrain; and we visualize his recurrent episodes of bartering for land he has no intention of buying. Actually, he is aiming at something close to argument in this language. The details of description and narrative are the appropriate underpinnings of an imperative: “But I would say to my fellows, once for all, As long as possible live free and uncommitted.” The charm of Thoreau's narrative needs no apology; insofar as his narrative moves toward open or implied imperative, it moves toward argument.





# THE AMERICAN WAY OF BIRTH

SLOAN WILSON



The young professor of sociology was intense and intelligent. He sat in a bar near my home in Manhattan, sipped beer, and denounced the procedures of childbirth in the United States.

Most American women, he said, are so flabby, so unexercised that they don't have the muscles to give birth naturally. Besides, they are so terrified of childbirth that their whole bodies freeze, contracting muscles which should be relaxed. The terror, he said, comes in part from deep ignorance; in primitive cultures, most young girls have seen children being born, but in the United States most women's knowledge is theoretical until they have babies themselves.

They are rigid with fear the moment labor starts, and obstetricians drug them heavily because they are on the edge of hysteria. Thus they go through childbirth without knowing what is happening and without being able to help much. The drug in their blood gets into the baby, and the infant is born too doped to suckle, even if the mother were awake enough to present her breast. During the mother's drug hangover, the baby is fed glucose, and loses the will to nurse. Probably the mother does not really want to nurse anyway, because of American prudery and feminine vanity. So the baby stays on the bottle, graduates to pasty canned foods, and grows up with its oral needs unsatisfied. And *that*, my friend explained with an air of triumph, is why so many people smoke too much, drink too much alcohol, and need tranquilizers and sleeping pills.

This is also why we build hydrogen bombs and obsolete aircraft carriers, instead of schools and hospitals for the poor. Because we are frustrated from birth, we grow up filled with hostility and fear.

It all sounded quite convincing there in the barroom. Then I went home to my apartment, where my pregnant wife sat knitting a small yellow sweater.

"Did you have a good time?" she asked.

"Pretty good. A lot of the college crowd was there."

She yawned, put the little sweater aside, and stood up. Catching a glimpse of herself in the mirror, she said, "Don't you think I'm getting to be enormous for six months? What would you do if we had twins?"

"Look for a bigger apartment," I said, and followed her to bed. She slept, but I remained awake, trying to make sense out of the young sociologist's diatribe, and what I knew of childbirth myself.

I was forty-three and had had four children by an earlier marriage when I was very young. The first was born dead, and perhaps that was why childbirth had always been full of terror for me. News of that first disaster came to me when I was in Greenland during the war, and the message was all garbled, so that for days I had had no clear idea of what was going on. My next three children were born beautiful and bright and are growing up a good deal less neurotic than their father.

When they were born, I had never heard of "natural childbirth." On the advice of our suburban obstetricians, I had taken my wife to the hospital, paced the corridors in the time-honored way, accepted the news of birth with joy, and had not worried too much when for various physical reasons my first wife found it impossible to nurse.

But now as I was about to become a father again, new theories about childbirth were being talked about in bars, and I had to find the best way of doing everything. I felt this responsibility all the more keenly because my second wife was fourteen years younger than I and had the charming illusion that I was wise and should make the important decisions. If I recommended natural childbirth with no drugs, she would try to follow that course.

### THE BOOKS SAID . . .

The next day I went to a bookstore and bought several volumes about natural childbirth and infant care. Among them were, *Thank you, Dr. Lamaze*, by Marjorie Karmel, and *Nursing Your Baby*, by Karen Pryor. These books and many pamphlets presented an exuberant, earthy philosophy which glorified the act of birth as a supreme moment in life, and celebrated nursing as a mystic communion be-

tween mother and child, as well as a medically desirable practice for both. The fear and pain associated with childbirth were explained away much as a Christian Scientist or an all-out-believer in theories of psychosomatic illness might explain them away. The books made four points clear:

(1) We should have an obstetrician who believed enough in the theories of natural childbirth to withhold drugs, at least until they were proved absolutely necessary, and we should have a pediatrician who would encourage nursing and insist that the baby's appetite should not be sneakily removed by artificial feeding

(2) We should take a six-weeks course in natural childbirth, and my wife should practice exercises taught there.

(3) I should remain by her side during labor and, if the hospital allowed, during delivery

(4) The infant should be kept by the mother's side in the hospital, not in a central nursery.

Most of these thoughts filled me with alarm. A doctor I knew had recommended our obstetrician. He had attended a young friend of ours who was terrified at the onset of labor and had been drugged almost from the moment she got to the hospital. She remembered nothing and, on doctor's advice, had decided against nursing. All this now seemed ominous and it stirred up my lifelong mixture of admiration and suspicion concerning physicians.

All the doctors I knew in my youth were regarded almost as gods by my parents, and they lived up to the image remarkably well. In my early adult years I was shocked when a surgeon who had become a good friend asked me to help him edit an article on fee-splitting, unnecessary surgery for money, and other unethical practices. A little later I got involved in an all-out fight with a hospital staff when they wanted me to leave my three-year-old daughter, who had pneumonia, alone in a room which seemed to her to be full of terror. I won that fight by sleeping on the floor, and when I wrote a story about it for *Harper's* ("The Black Mollies"), a good deal of medical opinion came to my defense. The experience taught me that sometimes the layman can be right when he fights with a doctor, but in all conscience he has to realize that he's working with very little knowledge, and can hamper a good doctor's attempts to preserve life.

I didn't want to argue with my obstetrician in hospital corridors while my wife was in labor, and decided that the best thing to do was to write him a long letter asking his beliefs on natural childbirth and nursing. If we seemed to disagree on principle, I thought, I could change obstetricians now.

The necessity of taking a course in natural childbirth seemed odd to me because I didn't see why one had to study to learn something that was supposed to be natural. But the idea of remaining by my

wife's side during labor and delivery seemed to make sense. Many hospitals are understaffed nowadays, and I knew women who had been left alone and terrified in the labor room. The idea of having the husband present was to give the wife a sense of safety and relaxation, as well as to allow him to share the whole experience as much as possible. I suspected that my wife would be more than usually glad to have me by her side, because her mother had suffered a long terminal illness within the past few years, and the very smell of a hospital was full of implications of agony for her. All this seemed to call for my presence, but there was only one difficulty: I wasn't at all sure I would have the guts to stand by her calmly while she writhed in labor, and I was terrified that I would faint when the child actually started to emerge.

Though the books said that the moment of birth was the supreme experience for both mother and father, I suspected that it would be bloody and slippery and agonizing. My mother had told me of one case in which a father passed out, and was simply shoved under the delivery table while the necessary work went on. I doubted if such a performance on my part would help my wife, and I knew that it would ruin my self-respect. Above all, I did not want to lose my wife's lovely concept of me as a calm and wise man. Suddenly January 12, the day my child was supposed to be born, loomed as the day of my greatest test.

The fourth point the books made, that of keeping the infant by the mother's side in the hospital, seemed sensible. My instinct told me that the separation of a mother and child should not be too sudden, and I had seen many understaffed baby wards, where the infants were allowed to lie crying more than seemed to me to be reasonable. The only trouble with "rooming-in," as the practice was called, was that some hospitals didn't allow it. That might mean a fight with a hospital staff, which I would try to resolve ahead of time.

### *THE OBSTETRICIAN SAID . . .*

That night, after talking the matter over with my wife, I wrote our obstetrician a long letter. His answer was to invite us to his office for a talk on a Saturday, when he ordinarily did not receive patients.

The obstetrician was a man my own age or perhaps a little younger, yet I felt curiously as though I were being summoned by my headmaster for admonishment. There was something undeniably silly in my position: I, who had read three or four books on childbirth, was more or less trying to lay down the law for this man who had made a career of obstetrics. Still, it was worth arguing about. And perhaps there was a little vanity involved: my wife had been a pro-

fessional dancer, and she had always maintained her program of diet and exercise. Just before she got pregnant, she weighed 108 pounds, with a height of five feet three inches. She was in the best of physical condition, and maybe there was something boastful in my claim that she would need little help in delivering a child.

"Good morning," my wife and I said in unison, and laughed nervously.

"This natural-childbirth thing is pretty complex," he said, sitting down behind his desk and lighting a cigarette.

(Had he been nursed? I had been, but I also lit up a cigarette. My wife doesn't smoke, and seemed totally calm. She doesn't remember whether she was nursed or not.)

"I think that possibly the drugs and the difficulty so many women seem to have with nursing may be a contributing cause to a lot of neurotic traits," I began, stammering a little. "And the rooming-in seems to me to be important. I'd go crazy if you left me for three days screaming in a baby ward."

"In most hospitals the babies are pretty well taken care of," the doctor said easily. "Sometimes the mothers need a rest."

"Would they if they weren't drugged?"

Despite myself, my voice was tinged with hostility. I had heard that obstetricians don't like natural childbirth because they would rather induce labor with chemicals to suit their own schedules, instead of waiting for birth to take place in its own good time.

"It's very hard to generalize about childbirth," the obstetrician said with a weary smile. "Sometimes there is great pain and sometimes almost none. Some women can relax and some can't help being terrified. If there is pain, I believe in drugs. Would you see any great virtue in having a tooth out without Novocain?"

"No," I said, a little confused. "But I don't want my wife drugged before she needs it, as a matter of course . . ."

"I never do that," he said mildly.

"I don't want the baby fed in the nursery out of a bottle. I want the baby to need to nurse."

"We'll certainly give the baby a chance," he said. "A lot of these things we simply have to play by ear."

"Can we have the rooming-in plan?"

"Yes. The Lenox Hill Hospital can arrange for that, if your wife wants it and is well enough."

"I want it," my wife said. "I think I'll be well enough."

"Good," he said, lighting another cigarette.

"Can I be with her through labor and delivery?" I asked, lighting a cigar.

"Through labor, yes. I'll have to see how the hospital feels about letting you stay through delivery."

"I'd like to get that settled ahead of time."

He smiled. "Don't create a situation," he said, "in which either of you will suffer a sense of defeat if everything doesn't go according to some prearranged plan. Childbirth is complicated. People react to it in complicated ways."

He was looking at me closely, and I was suddenly aware that he knew he had three patients now, the baby, the mother, and me, and that it was obvious that I needed close watching. Was I really hoping that he would tell me that I could not be present during the delivery? This thought made me pugnacious.

"I really want to be with my wife during the delivery if it's at all possible," I said.

"If it's an easy delivery and if you have the peculiar temperament which allows you to witness an operation for the first time with equanimity, perhaps it can be arranged," he said, and snuffed out his cigarette.

"How about the course in natural childbirth?" my wife asked. "Can you recommend one?"

"Yes," he said, scribbled a name and address on a piece of paper, and handed it to me. "I think you'll find this woman very good."

His talk about "if it's an easy delivery . . ." was beginning to work on my anxieties. After the prenatal examinations he had made of my wife, did he know something he wasn't telling us? I ached to ask him, but didn't want to scare my wife. She solved this by getting up and going to the lavatory.

"Is she all right?" I asked him in a stage whisper. "Do you expect anything but an easy delivery?"

"She's fine," he said. "The baby's heartbeat is strong, and she's healthy as can be. I just don't want you to think that childbirth is always as easy as the natural childbirth enthusiasts sometimes paint it. If she can have the baby painlessly without drugs, fine. If not, I don't want you to try to tie my hands."

"I wouldn't even if I could," I said with sudden humility. "But if she can't have natural childbirth, who can? She's exercised all her life, and I've never seen the slightest trace of fear."

"The muscles of the uterus don't have anything to do with the exterior muscles," he said. "Maybe she will have an easy time of it, and maybe she won't. I just don't want either of you to think that there's only one way of doing this."

My wife returned, and we all smiled, as though we had been telling jokes.

"Perhaps," I said, "I have been oversimplifying some of my theories about the American Way of Birth."

"Do you know how foreigners do it?" he asked.

"Which foreigners?" my wife, who had been doing some reading of her own, asked. "I understand that there's a tribe in Africa which kills all breech births."

"I suppose you could find some culture which does anything," the doctor replied. "But in some European countries they wrap a newborn infant in swaddling clothes and leave it strictly alone for three days."

"And that's why the Russians and the French have been such models of emotional security all through history?" my wife asked.

"*Touché*," he said. "We are all to some extent neurotic cultures. The point is whether the drugs used in childbirth and the lack of nursing in America are the result of neurosis or the cause of it or both. I simply have to deal with individuals. If a woman is in terror, drugs are all I have to give, in the time I have to deal with her, and if she really doesn't want to nurse, formulas are my only answer. If you can get along without drugs and without formulas, so much the better. We'll give it a try, at least."

"Thank you," I said, and as soon as I left his office, went with my wife to the nearest bar. She doesn't drink, but I needed two martinis to still the feeling that it was I, and not some theory of childbirth, which was being challenged.

### RELAXING LIKE CRAZY

A few days later we went to our first class in natural childbirth. The other couples were in their late teens and early twenties, and all seemed to be college instructors and other kinds of young intellectuals. "Natural childbirth," I was told, chiefly interests people who regard themselves as unusually intelligent and educated. Uneducated Negro women, Puerto Ricans, and white women from rural sections where "natural childbirth" was for centuries the only possible choice, now commonly ask for drugs when they come to a New York City hospital, for they regard release from the pain their mothers and grandmothers experienced as a benefit of modern urban living.

The course was not demanding. We saw large photographs of sculptures depicting the development of the fetus. They taught us more about the growth of a child inside the mother than we ever learned in college biology courses. The women students were then told to lie on the floor and pant, while rubbing their bellies. This provided a curious and occasionally hilarious sight at which no one was supposed to laugh. The breathing exercises were supposed to take the mind off the contractions of the uterus, and the "effleurage"—or massaging of the belly—also was designed to reduce tension. We

husbands were told to tell our wives to relax, becoming quite sharp about it when we saw them stiffening their arms and legs. The general philosophy was that full knowledge of the process of childbirth removed fear and that, just as a football player can bruise himself without even knowing it in the heat of a game, a woman can through concentration forget about the straining of her body. This was hard for me to believe, but like most religions, I suspected, it was true only if you did believe it, and both my wife and I tried our best.

After we had several sessions of panting and belly rubbing and telling each other to relax, we saw a French movie in color of a woman giving birth to a child without drugs. It was her third child, and the movie lasted only about seven minutes. Although I had seen combat during the war, the gush of blood and other fluids which accompanied the birth of the child shocked me, and I wondered more than ever if I was going to be a great rock of stability while my wife burst forth with life.

At home my wife continued the breathing exercises, and I practiced counting in a calm, relaxed voice to let her know how long a theoretical contraction had lasted. The idea was that pain would be easier to bear if she knew how long it would last. The talk about "painless childbirth" and the instructions about how to combat pain confused us a little, but we persevered.

As January 12 neared, we tried to relax so much that sometimes we must have looked as though we had some mild form of sleeping sickness. But January 12 came and went without anything happening. According to Dorland's *Medical Dictionary*, the normal period of gestation is usually 266 days, but our doctor said that people are rarely sure of the date of conception. So we waited, relaxing like crazy, me with martinis and cigars and sleeping pills, my wife with her knitting. The baby began to acquire the biggest wardrobe in the family.

On the morning of January 22, my wife woke me up and said calmly, "My water broke." Because of our training course in natural childbirth, we didn't panic—often the child doesn't come for another twenty-four hours, and first babies rarely hurry. I tripped only once on the way to the telephone to call the obstetrician and I was rather disappointed when he said, "Just take it easy. Take it easy. Keep me informed when the contractions start."

We dressed, put some records on the phonograph, and I got breakfast. There was an air of supreme tension, much like days during the war when enemy planes were reported in the area, and we sat at our combat stations aboard a high-octane-gas tanker, eating sandwiches and waiting. The parallel of expectant death and expectant birth worried me. There was still in me the premonition of tragedy that had to be hidden from my wife, who once more sat serenely knitting.



## *I DID THE COUNTING*

The day dragged on and I wanted a drink and knew that this was precisely the wrong time to have one or two or three. We talked and laughed a lot, reliving our honeymoon in Ireland, where my wife had lived almost half her life. All jokes seemed marvelously funny, as they had during the worst moments of the war, especially the Irish jokes.

"In this window," the Irishman said, "there was nothing and in that window, nothing at all."

My wife's brogue came back when she told that little pleasantry.

We discussed an Irish automobile accident we had seen. A small car rounded a corner at seventy miles an hour, skidded, and turned over, throwing a man out on the street. Horrified, we stopped our car, and tried to remember old courses in first aid, but the man who had been thrown to the street got up, dusted off his pants, and with the help of ourselves and many other spectators, righted his car, got in, and drove off cursing. There had been an air of magic about the incident, death turned into comedy.

We laughed and played records of *Guys and Dolls*, in which my wife had once danced briefly. We discussed the meaning of the phrase, "chorus girl," which she utters with humility and I say with pride.

At about six in the evening the contractions started in earnest, and they certainly were natural, but not painless. My wife did the panting and the belly rubbing that was supposed to take her mind off it, and I did the counting. I was proud that I could make my voice sound reasonably calm and detached, as though I were counting backward to send a rocket to the moon.

This went on all night. By telephone I kept in close touch with the doctor, and I was grateful that he didn't order us to the hospital, because our apartment was a more pleasant place to spend the so-called painless hours. Actually, the pain was not so bad, my wife said—nothing she couldn't handle. I kept records of the contractions as they began to come every fifteen minutes, then went erratic, arriving every half-hour, then every five minutes, and then stopping altogether.

"False labor," the doctor said, and added that the sac enclosing the fluid around the baby had probably torn only a little. But at seven in the morning he advised us to come to the hospital, because in such circumstances, he explained, a woman's body is dangerously open to infection, and no time should be wasted. He said he would meet us in the labor room at eight.

We waited until seven-thirty, grabbed the suitcase which had been packed for two weeks, and caught a taxi, telling the driver to drive carefully, not to hurry. When we got to the hospital, a cheerful

Negro attendant met us with a wheelchair which seemed suddenly to reduce my wife to an invalid. A look of fear crossed her face for the first time, and recalling her mother's long illness, I knew that the white-coated interns and the soft-sliding doors of the elevators were not contributing to her relaxation.

"Don't leave me," she said, grabbing my hand.

"I promise," I said, as we got into an elevator and started up.

On the seventh floor a stiffly starched nurse said that my wife should go to her room, where she would be "prepped" for delivery. We went to the room, and another nurse said she should go down to the delivery room for her preparation, because they did not have sufficient staff in the private rooms. She was wheeled into the elevator again, and at the door of the delivery room I was ordered to wait outside.

I waited more than an hour, and the doctor who said he would meet us at eight was not visible at nine. Where was he? After asking many people for change, I found a dime, called his office, and was told by his answering service that he was at the hospital. Unknown to me, he had entered by another door, and was fully in charge.

At nine-thirty, he appeared and invited me into the labor room, a small chamber with an ordinary hospital bed. My wife was lying there with two pretty young nurses, joking about the fact that the baby didn't seem to want to be born. She was glad to see me and grabbed my hand, but I could tell that the warmth of the young nurses had removed some of her terror. Since her arrival, she said, no one had left her alone.

Abruptly the contractions started again. Mustering my best pose of calmness, I started to count, and we both told each other to relax. The counting proved silly when a young Puerto Rican nurse of great beauty put her hand on my wife's belly and said, "It's starting now. It's almost over. There's the peak of it. Now it's dying down." I was given the job of noting the time of the contractions, but I noticed that the nurses were doing it too. They were thoughtful in giving me things to keep me busy.

The doctor appeared from time to time and listened to the fetal heartbeat, always assuring us that it was strong. When he was away the young nurses listened to it, groping about with the stethoscope when the baby changed position. There was something terribly ominous about this. My wife complained that the stethoscope was cold, and one of my jobs was to hold it in my pocket to keep it warm.

Intermittent labor went on all morning. The doctor came in every few minutes, and we all made jokes and told each other to relax. From time to time he examined my wife's cervix, which was supposed to open to the width of five fingers before birth could take place. Two fingers he said at noon, and then three fingers. He guessed

that birth might take place at two-thirty, but then the labor stopped altogether

### *SENT OUTSIDE TO WAIT*

While the doctor examined my wife, I was told to go and stand in the corner, because my presence apparently embarrassed the nurses or somebody. Standing there with my face to the wall like a bad boy, I felt the tension rising within me almost to the breaking point. There was a lot of blood on the sheets now, and when the labor started again, my wife started to pant and to rub her belly as she had been taught, but her eyes were obviously wild with pain, and her whole body writhed. I held her hand and counted, sounding mindless to myself. My wife spoke seldom and never above a whisper.

"I don't know how much longer I can take it," she said finally.

The doctor motioned to me, and I followed him outside to a private room.

"Things aren't going just right," he said. "She's working, but she's not getting results. Sometimes the uterus just isn't strong enough to push the baby out. I think the baby's bigger than we expected."

"What can we do?" I asked.

"We can induce it—certain chemicals can make the uterus work harder. That will increase the pain, but we can control that if you want."

We went back to the labor room. There was more blood, and my wife was bathed in sweat.

"I don't want any more of this," she said to me in a low voice. "Knock me out."

An apparatus was brought in to drip some substance into the veins of her wrist. She was given injections. Her body writhed in more torment than ever, the blood increased, and I started to grow a little dizzy. I looked at the clock. It was three in the afternoon. My wife had been in labor for more than twenty-four hours.

"Your wife is not conscious now," the doctor said. "I don't think she needs you anymore. Wait outside."

I fled to the private doctor's room, and to my own horror, suddenly doubled up in tears. The spasm lasted only about five minutes. The doctor came in just as I was recovering, and said, "Why don't you go outside and get something to eat? I think I'll have some news for you in about an hour."

"Is she all right?"

"It's not a normal delivery because her uterus isn't strong enough and it's a very big baby in a small woman, but we'll get through it. Go have a drink."

*IT WAS SIMPLE*

I went to a bar across the street and had two martinis, finding that they brought me gradually down to earth. When I went back to the hospital I found that a young actress, a friend of my wife, had become worried by the long labor, and had arrived with sandwiches, vodka, and coffee for me. We sat for an hour drinking and talking, jumping each time the door from the delivery room opened. The phrase, "death watch," kept entering my mind, driving out the phrase, "birth watch." I could not understand why I expected only the worst.

In the end it was simple. At five o'clock the doctor came out with his white suit stained with blood, and said I had a beautiful new daughter who weighed almost eight and a half pounds, and that my wife was still unconscious, but was doing well. Five hours later my wife was sitting up in bed, nursing the baby for the first time, groggy but suddenly slim again and full of smiles.

The next day the doctor came in and talked to us. We had failed at natural childbirth—both drugs and forceps had been necessary, along with an episiotomy, a slight incision to avoid a ragged tear. In a real state of nature, my wife quite probably would have died, along with the baby, after writhing for another forty hours in fruitless pain. A less skillful doctor probably would have performed a Caesarian early, or might have injured the baby with forceps. The myth that drugs prevent nursing was soon dispelled. My wife turned out to be one of the lucky ones, and her milk came in strongly on the third day, precluding all other foods.

After those days of tension, we were both limp from exhaustion for almost a month. Many friends asked us what we thought about natural childbirth. In retrospect we are glad we were together during those long hours of labor. When things go just right, as they do in that French movie which takes seven minutes, a strong, relaxed young woman and a calm, unneurotic father probably can find the moment of birth a great joy. But when things mysteriously go wrong, the American way of birth is nothing to be regarded with contempt. The "naturals," as savages were once called, didn't have drugs, but they probably had a high rate of death in childbirth. Maybe if we were all completely relaxed about reproduction, childbirth would be easier, but for many of us, a six-weeks course is not enough to remove a lifetime of inhibition and fear.

Our baby is alive mostly through the forces of nature, but also through the abilities of a good doctor. Enthusiasts for natural childbirth or for drugged, artificially induced childbirth are both wrong, in my opinion. Each woman should take the course in natural child-

birth and go as far as she can without drugs. If the baby doesn't come easily, one can have only gratitude for the many skills and pain-killers which have been developed in Europe and in this country over the past half-century. The American way of birth is much derided these days by male intellectuals, but women of all backgrounds, I find, speak rather softly about it, at least after they have their first child.

# NEW MEXICO

D. H. LAWRENCE



Superficially, the world has become small and known. Poor little globe of earth, the tourists trot round you as easily as they trot round the Bois or round Central Park. There is no mystery left, we've been there, we've seen it, we know all about it. We've done the globe, and the globe is done.

This is quite true, superficially. On the superficies, horizontally, we've been everywhere and done everything, we know all about it. Yet the more we know, superficially, the less we penetrate, vertically. It's all very well skimming across the surface of the ocean, and saying you know all about the sea. There still remain the terrifying under-deeps, of which we have utterly no experience.

The same is true of land travel. We skim along, we get there, we see it all, we've done it all. And as a rule, we never once go through the curious film which railroads, ships, motor-cars, and hotels stretch over the surface of the whole earth. Peking is just the same as New York, with a few different things to look at; rather more Chinese about, etc. Poor creatures that we are, we crave for experience, yet we are like flies that crawl on the pure and transparent mucous-paper in which the world like a bon-bon is wrapped so carefully that we can never get at it, though we see it there all the time as we move about it, apparently in contact, yet actually as far removed as if it were the moon.

As a matter of fact, our great-grandfathers, who never went anywhere, in actuality had more experience of the world than we have,

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who have seen everything. When they listened to a lecture with lantern-slides, they really held their breath before the unknown, as they sat in the village school-room. We, bowling along in a rickshaw in Ceylon, say to ourselves "It's very much what you'd expect." We really know it all

We are mistaken. The know-it-all state of mind is just the result of being outside the mucous-paper wrapping of civilization. Underneath is everything we don't know and are afraid of knowing.

I realized this with shattering force when I went to New Mexico.

New Mexico, one of the United States, part of the U.S.A. New Mexico, the picturesque reservation and playground of the eastern states, very romantic, old Spanish, Red Indian, desert mesas, pueblos, cowboys, penitentes, all that film-stuff. Very nice, the great South-West, put on a sombrero and knot a red kerchief round your neck, to go out in the great free spaces!

That is New Mexico wrapped in the absolutely hygienic and shiny mucous-paper of our trite civilization. That is the New Mexico known to most of the Americans who know it at all. But break through the shiny sterilized wrapping, and actually *touch* the country, and you will never be the same again.

I think New Mexico was the greatest experience from the outside world that I have ever had. It certainly changed me for ever. Curious as it may sound, it was New Mexico that liberated me from the present era of civilization, the great era of material and mechanical development. Months spent in holy Kandy, in Ceylon, the holy of holies of southern Buddhism, had not touched the great psyche of materialism and idealism which dominated me. And years, even in the exquisite beauty of Sicily, right among the old Greek paganism that still lives there, had not shattered the essential Christianity on which my character was established. Australia was a sort of dream or trance, like being under a spell, the self remaining unchanged, so long as the trance did not last too long. Tahiti, in a mere glimpse, repelled me: and so did California, after a stay of a few weeks. There seemed a strange brutality in the spirit of the western coast, and I felt: O, let me get away!

But the moment I saw the brilliant, proud morning shine high up over the deserts of Santa Fé, something stood still in my soul, and I started to attend. There was a certain magnificence in the high-up day, a certain eagle-like royalty, so different from the equally pure, equally pristine and lovely morning of Australia, which is so soft, so utterly pure in its softness, and betrayed by green parrot flying. But in the lovely morning of Australia one went into a dream. In the magnificent fierce morning of New Mexico one sprang awake, a new part of the soul woke up suddenly, and the old world gave way to a new.

There are all kinds of beauty in the world, thank God, though ugliness is homogeneous. How lovely is Sicily, with Calabria across the sea like an opal, and Etna with her snow in a world above and beyond! How lovely is Tuscany, with little red tulips wild among the corn, or blue-bells at dusk in England, or mimosa in clouds of pure yellow among the grey-green dun foliage of Australia, under a soft, blue, unbreathed sky! But for a *greatness* of beauty I have never experienced anything like New Mexico. All those mornings when I went with a hoe along the ditch to the Cañon, at the ranch, and stood, in the fierce, proud silence of the Rockies, on their foot-hills, to look far over the desert to the blue mountains away in Arizona, blue as chalcedony, with the sage-brush desert sweeping grey-blue in between, dotted with tiny cube-crystals of houses, the vast amphitheatre of lofty, indomitable desert, sweeping round to the ponderous Sangre de Cristo mountains on the east, and coming up flush at the pine-dotted foot-hills of the Rockies! What splendour! Only the tawny eagle could really sail out into the splendour of it all. Leo Stein once wrote to me. It is the most æsthetically-satisfying landscape I know. To me it was much more than that. It had a splendid silent terror, and a vast far-and-wide magnificence which made it way beyond mere æsthetic appreciation. Never is the light more pure and overweening than there, arching with a royalty almost cruel over the hollow, uptilted world. For it is curious that the land which has produced modern political democracy at its highest pitch should give one the greatest sense of overweening, terrible proudness and mercilessness: but so beautiful, God! so beautiful! Those that have spent morning after morning alone there pitched among the pines above the great proud world of desert will know, almost unbearably how beautiful it is, how clear and unquestioned is the might of the day. Just day itself is tremendous there. It is so easy to understand that the Aztecs gave hearts of men to the sun. For the sun is not merely hot or scorching, not at all. It is of a brilliant and unchallengeable purity and haughty serenity which would make one sacrifice the heart to it. Ah, yes, in New Mexico the heart is sacrificed to the sun and the human being is left stark, heartless, but undauntedly religious.

And that was the second revelation out there. I had looked over all the world for something that would strike *me* as religious. The simple piety of some English people, the semi-pagan mystery of some Catholics in southern Italy, the intensity of some Bavarian peasants, the semi-ecstasy of Buddhists or Brahmins: all this had seemed religious all right, as far as the parties concerned were involved, but it didn't involve me. I looked on at their religiousness from the outside. For it is still harder to feel religion at will than to love at will.

I had seen what I felt was a hint of wild religion in the so-called



devil dances of a group of naked villagers from the far-remote jungle in Ceylon, dancing at midnight under the torches, glittering wet with sweat on their dark bodies as if they had been gilded, at the celebration of the Pera-hera, in Kandy, given to the Prince of Wales. And the utter dark absorption of these naked men, as they danced with their knees wide apart, suddenly affected me with a *sense* of religion, I *felt* religion for a moment. For religion is an experience, an uncontrollable sensual experience, even more so than love. I use sensual to mean an experience deep down in the senses, inexplicable and inscrutable.

But this experience was fleeting, gone in the curious turmoil of the Pera-hera, and I had no permanent feeling of religion till I came to New Mexico and penetrated into the old human race-experience there. It is curious that it should be in America, of all places, that a European should really experience religion, after touching the old Mediterranean and the East. It is curious that one should get a sense of living religion from the Red Indians, having failed to get it from Hindus or Sicilian Catholics or Cingalese.

Let me make a reservation. I don't stand up to praise the Red Indian as he reveals himself in contact with white civilization. From that angle, I am forced to admit he *may* be thoroughly objectionable. Even my small experience knows it. But also I know he *may* be thoroughly nice, even in his dealings with white men. It's a question of individuals, a good deal, on both sides.

But in this article, I don't want to deal with the everyday or superficial aspect of New Mexico, outside the mucous-paper wrapping, I *want* to go beneath the surface. But therefore the American Indian in his behaviour as an American citizen doesn't really concern me. What concerns me is what he is—or what he seems to me to be, in his ancient, ancient race-self and religious-self.

For the Red Indian seems to me much older than Greeks, or Hindus or any Europeans or even Egyptians. The Red Indian, as a civilized and truly religious man, civilized beyond taboo and totem, as he is in the south, is religious in perhaps the oldest sense, and deepest, of the word. That is to say, he is a remnant of the most deeply religious race still living. So it seems to me.

But again let me protect myself. The Indian who sells you baskets on Albuquerque station or who slinks around Taos plaza may be an utter waster and an indescribably low dog. Personally he may be even less religious than a New York sneak-thief. He may have broken with his tribe, or his tribe itself may have collapsed finally from its old religious integrity, and ceased, really to exist. Then he is only fit for rapid absorption into white civilization, which must make the best of him.

But while a tribe retains its religion and keeps up its religious practices, and while any member of the tribe shares in those practices,

then there is a tribal integrity and a living tradition going back far beyond the birth of Christ, beyond the pyramids, beyond Moses. A vast old religion which once swayed the earth lingers in unbroken practice there in New Mexico, older, perhaps, than anything in the world save Australian aboriginal taboo and totem, and that is not yet religion.

You can feel it, the atmosphere of it, around the pueblos. Not, of course, when the place is crowded with sight-seers and motor-cars. But go to Taos pueblo on some brilliant snowy morning and see the white figure on the roof: or come riding through at dusk on some windy evening, when the black skirts of the silent women blow around the white wide boots, and you will feel the old, old root of human consciousness still reaching down to depths we know nothing of: and of which, only too often, we are jealous. It seems it will not be long before the pueblos are uprooted.

But never shall I forget watching the dancers, the men with the fox-skin swaying down from their buttocks, file out at San Geronimo, and the women with seed rattles following. The long, streaming, glistening black hair of the men. Even in ancient Crete long hair was sacred in a man, as it is still in the Indians. Never shall I forget the utter absorption of the dance, so quiet, so steadily, timelessly rhythmic, and silent, with the ceaseless down-tread, always to the earth's centre, the very reverse of the upflow of Dionysiac or Christian ecstasy. Never shall I forget the deep singing of the men at the drum, swelling and sinking, the deepest sound I have heard in all my life, deeper than thunder, deeper than the sound of the Pacific Ocean, deeper than the roar of a deep waterfall: the wonderful deep sound of men calling to the unspeakable depths.

Never shall I forget coming into the little pueblo of San Filippi one sunny morning in spring, unexpectedly, when bloom was on the trees in the perfect little pueblo more old, more utterly peaceful and idyllic than anything in Theocritus, and seeing a little casual dance. Not impressive as a spectacle, only, to me, profoundly moving because of the truly terrifying religious absorption of it.

Never shall I forget the Christmas dances at Taos, twilight, snow, the darkness coming over the great wintry mountains and the lonely pueblo, then suddenly, again, like dark calling to dark, the deep Indian cluster-singing around the drum, wild and awful, suddenly rousing on the last dusk as the procession starts. And then the bon-fires leaping suddenly in pure spurts of high flame, columns of sudden flame forming an alley for the procession.

Never shall I forget the khiva of birch-trees, away in the Apache country, in Arizona this time, the tepees and flickering fires, the neighing of horses unseen under the huge dark night, and the Apaches all abroad, in their silent moccasined feet: and in the khiva, beyond a

little fire, the old man reciting, reciting in the unknown Apache speech, in the strange wild Indian voice that re-echoes away back to before the Flood, reciting apparently the traditions and legends of the tribe, going on and on, while the young men, the *braves* of today, wandered in, listened, and wandered away again, overcome with the power and majesty of that utterly old tribal voice, yet uneasy with their half-adherence to the modern civilization, the two things in contact. And one of these *braves* shoved his face under my hat, in the night, and stared with his glittering eyes close to mine. He'd have killed me then and there, had he dared. He didn't dare: and I knew it and he knew it

Never shall I forget the Indian races, when the young men, even the boys, run naked, smeared with white earth and stuck with bits of eagle fluff for the swiftness of the heavens, and the old men brush them with eagle feathers, to give them power. And they run in the strange hurling fashion of the primitive world, hurled forward, not making speed deliberately. And the race is not for victory. It is not a contest. There is no competition. It is a great cumulative effort. The tribe this day is adding up its male energy and exerting it to the utmost—for what? To get power, to get strength: to come, by sheer cumulative, hurling effort of the bodies of men, into contact with the great cosmic source of vitality which gives strength, power, energy to the men who can grasp it, energy for the zeal of attainment.

It was a vast old religion, greater than anything we know more starkly and nakedly religious. There is no God, no conception of a god. All is god. But it is not the pantheism we are accustomed to, which expresses itself as "God is everywhere, God is in everything." In the oldest religion, everything was alive, not supernaturally but naturally alive. There were only deeper and deeper streams of life, vibrations of life more and more vast. So rocks were alive, but a mountain had a deeper, vaster life than a rock, and it was much harder for a man to bring his spirit, or his energy, into contact with the life of the mountain, and so draw strength from the mountain, as from a great standing well of life, than it was to come into contact with the rock. And he had to put forth a great religious effort. For the whole life-effort of man was to get his life into direct contact with the elemental life of the cosmos, mountain-life, cloud-life, thunder-life, air-life, earth-life, sun-life. To come into immediate *felt* contact, and so derive energy, power, and a dark sort of joy. This effort into sheer naked contact, *without an intermediary or mediator*, is the root meaning of religion, and at the sacred races the runners hurled themselves in a terrible cumulative effort, through the air, to come at last into naked contact with the very life of the air, which is the life of the clouds, and so of the rain.

It was a vast and pure religion, without idols or images, even

mental ones. It is the oldest religion, a cosmic religion the same for all peoples, not broken up into specific gods or saviours or systems. It is the religion which precedes the god-concept, and is therefore greater and deeper than any god-religion.

And it lingers still, for a little while, in New Mexico: but long enough to have been a revelation to me. And the Indian, however objectionable he may be on occasion, has still some of the strange beauty and pathos of the religion that brought him forth and is now shedding him away into oblivion. When Trinidad, the Indian boy, and I planted corn at the ranch, my soul paused to see his brown hands softly moving the earth over the maize in pure ritual. He was back in his old religious self, and the ages stood still. Ten minutes later he was making a fool of himself with the horses. Horses were never part of the Indian's religious life, never would be. He hasn't a tithe of the feeling for them that he has for a bear, for example. So horses don't like Indians.

But there it is. the newest democracy ousting the oldest religion! And once the oldest religion is ousted, one feels the democracy and all its paraphernalia will collapse, and the oldest religion, which comes down to us from man's pre-war days, will start again. The sky-scraper will scatter on the winds like thistledown, and the genuine America, the America of New Mexico, will start on its course again. This is an interregnum

# WHERE I LIVED, AND WHAT I LIVED FOR

HENRY DAVID THOREAU



At a certain season of our life we are accustomed to consider every spot as the possible site of a house. I have thus surveyed the country on every side within a dozen miles of where I live. In imagination I have bought all the farms in succession, for all were to be bought, and I knew their price. I walked over each farmer's premises, tasted his wild apples, discoursed on husbandry with him, took his farm at his price, at any price, mortgaging it to him in my mind; even put a higher price on it, — took everything but a deed of it, — took his word for his deed, for I dearly love to talk, — cultivated it, and him too to some extent, I trust, and withdrew when I had enjoyed it long enough, leaving him to carry it on. This experience entitled me to be regarded as a sort of real-estate broker by my friends. Wherever I sat, there I might live, and the landscape radiated from me accordingly. What is a house but a *sedes*, a seat? — better if a country seat. I discovered many a site for a house not likely to be soon improved, which some might have thought too far from the village, but to my eyes the village was too far from it. Well, there I might live, I said; and there I did live, for an hour, a summer and a winter life; saw how I could let the years run off, buffet the winter through, and see the spring come in. The future inhabitants of this region, wherever they may place their houses, may be sure that they have been anticipated. An afternoon sufficed to lay out the land into orchard,

wood-lot, and pasture, and to decide what fine oaks or pines should be left to stand before the door, and whence each blasted tree could be seen to the best advantage; and then I let it lie, fallow perchance, for a man is rich in proportion to the number of things which he can afford to let alone.

My imagination carried me so far that I even had the refusal of several farms, — the refusal was all I wanted, — but I never got my fingers burned by actual possession. The nearest that I came to actual possession was when I bought the Hollowell place, and had begun to sort my seeds, and collected materials with which to make a wheelbarrow to carry it on or off with, but before the owner gave me a deed of it, his wife—every man has such a wife—changed her mind and wished to keep it, and he offered me ten dollars to release him. Now, to speak the truth, I had but ten cents in the world, and it surpassed my arithmetic to tell, if I was that man who had ten cents, or who had a farm, or ten dollars, or all together. However, I let him keep the ten dollars and the farm too, for I had carried it far enough; or rather, to be generous, I sold him the farm for just what I gave for it, and, as he was not a rich man, made him a present of ten dollars, and still had my ten cents, and seeds, and materials for a wheelbarrow left. I found thus that I had been a rich man without any damage to my poverty. But I retained the landscape, and I have since annually carried off what it yielded without a wheelbarrow. With respect to landscapes,—

*"I am monarch of all I survey,  
My right there is none to dispute."*

I have frequently seen a poet withdraw, having enjoyed the most valuable part of a farm, while the crusty farmer supposed that he had got a few wild apples only. Why, the owner does not know it for many years when a poet has put his farm in rhyme, the most admirable kind of invisible fence, has fairly impounded it, milked it, skimmed it, and got all the cream, and left the farmer only the skimmed milk.

The real attractions of the Hollowell farm, to me, were its complete retirement, being about two miles from the village, half a mile from the nearest neighbor, and separated from the highway by a broad field; its bounding on the river, which the owner said protected it by its fogs from frosts in the spring, though that was nothing to me; the gray color and ruinous state of the house and barn, and the dilapidated fences, which put such an interval between me and the last occupant, the hollow and lichen-covered apple trees, gnawed by rabbits, showing what kind of neighbors I should have; but above all, the recollection I had of it from my earliest voyages up

the river, when the house was concealed behind a dense grove of red maples, through which I heard the house-dog bark. I was in haste to buy it, before the proprietor finished getting out some rocks, cutting down the hollow apple trees, and grubbing up some young birches which had sprung up in the pasture, or, in short, had made any more of his improvements. To enjoy these advantages I was ready to carry it on; like Atlas, to take the world on my shoulders, — I never heard what compensation he received for that, — and do all those things which had no other motive or excuse but that I might pay for it and be unmolested in my possession of it, for I knew all the while that it would yield the most abundant crop of the kind I wanted, if I could only afford to let it alone. But it turned out as I have said.

All that I could say, then, with respect to farming on a large scale — I have always cultivated a garden — was, that I had had my seeds ready. Many think that seeds improve with age. I have no doubt that time discriminates between the good and the bad; and when at last I shall plant, I shall be less likely to be disappointed. But I would say to my fellows, once for all, As long as possible live free and uncommitted. It makes but little difference whether you are committed to a farm or the county jail.

Old Cato, whose "*De Re Rusticâ*" is my "*Cultivator*," says, — and the only translation I have seen makes sheer nonsense of the passage, — "When you think of getting a farm turn it thus in your mind, not to buy greedily, nor spare your pains to look at it, and do not think it enough to go round it once. The oftener you go there the more it will please you, if it is good." I think I shall not buy greedily, but go round and round it as long as I live, and be buried in it first, that it may please me the more at last.

The present was my next experiment of this kind, which I purpose to describe more at length, for convenience putting the experience of two years into one. As I have said, I do not propose to write an ode to dejection, but to brag as lustily as chanticleer in the morning, standing on his roost, if only to wake my neighbors up.

When first I took up my abode in the woods, that is, began to spend my nights as well as days there, which, by accident, was on Independence Day, or the Fourth of July, 1845, my house was not finished for winter, but was merely a defence against the rain, without plastering or chimney, the walls being of rough, weather-stained boards, with wide chinks, which made it cool at night. The upright white hewn studs and freshly planed door and window casings gave it a clean and airy look, especially in the morning, when its timbers were saturated with dew, so that I fancied that by noon some sweet gum would exude from them. To my imagination it retained through-

out the day more or less of this auroral character, reminding me of a certain house on a mountain which I had visited a year before. This was an airy and unplastered cabin, to entertain a travelling god, and where a goddess might trail her garments. The winds which passed over my dwelling were such as sweep over the ridges of mountains, bearing the broken strains, or celestial parts only, of terrestrial music. The morning wind forever blows, the poem of creation is uninterrupted; but few are the ears that hear it. Olympus is but the outside of the earth everywhere.

The only house I had been the owner of before, if I except a boat, was a tent, which I used occasionally when making excursions in the summer, and this is still rolled up in my garret; but the boat, after passing from hand to hand, has gone down the stream of time. With this more substantial shelter about me, I had made some progress toward settling in the world. This frame, so slightly clad, was a sort of crystallization around me, and reacted on the builder. It was suggestive somewhat as a picture in outlines. I did not need to go outdoors to take the air, for the atmosphere within had lost none of its freshness. It was not so much within-doors as behind a door where I sat, even in the rainiest weather. The Harivansa says, "An abode without birds is like a meat without seasoning." Such was not my abode, for I found myself suddenly neighbor to the birds; not by having imprisoned one, but having caged myself near them. I was not only nearer to some of those which commonly frequent the garden and the orchard, but to those wilder and more thrilling songsters of the forest which never, or rarely, serenade a villager, — the wood thrush, the veery, the scarlet tanager, the field sparrow, the whip-poor-will, and many others.

I was seated by the shore of a small pond, about a mile and a half south of the village of Concord and somewhat higher than it, in the midst of an extensive wood between that town and Lincoln, and about two miles south of that our only field known to fame, Concord Battle Ground; but I was so low in the woods that the opposite shore, half a mile off, like the rest, covered with wood, was my most distant horizon. For the first week, whenever I looked out on the pond it impressed me like a tarn high up on the side of a mountain, its bottom far above the surface of other lakes, and, as the sun arose, I saw it throwing off its nightly clothing of mist, and here and there, by degrees, its soft ripples on its smooth reflecting surface was revealed, while the mists, like ghosts, were stealthily withdrawing in every direction into the woods, as at the breaking up of some nocturnal conventicle. The very dew seemed to hang upon the trees later into the day than usual, as on the sides of mountains.

This small lake was of most value as a neighbor in the intervals of a gentle rain-storm in August, when, both air and water being



perfectly still, but the sky overcast, mid-afternoon had all the serenity of evening, and the wood thrush sang around, and was heard from shore to shore. A lake like this is never smoother than at such a time, and the clear portion of the air above it being shallow and darkened by clouds, the water, full of light and reflections, becomes a lower heaven itself so much the more important. From a hill-top near by, where the wood had been recently cut off, there was a pleasing vista southward across the pond, through a wide indentation in the hills which form the shore there, where their opposite sides sloping toward each other suggested a stream flowing out in that direction through a wooded valley, but stream there was none. That way I looked between and over the near green hills to some distant and higher ones in the horizon, tinged with blue. Indeed, by standing on tiptoe I could catch a glimpse of some of the peaks of the still bluer and more distant mountain ranges in the northwest, those true-blue coins from heaven's own mint, and also of some portion of the village. But in other directions, even from this point, I could not see over or beyond the woods which surrounded me. It is well to have some water in your neighborhood, to give buoyancy to and float the earth. One value even of the smallest well is, that when you look into it you see that earth is not continent but insular. This is as important as that it keeps butter cool. When I looked across the pond from this peak toward the Sudbury meadows, which in time of flood I distinguished elevated perhaps by a mirage in their seething valley, like a coin in a basin, all the earth beyond the pond appeared like a thin crust insulated and floated even by this small sheet of intervening water, and I was reminded that this on which I dwelt was but *dry land*.

Though the view from my door was still more contracted, I did not feel crowded or confined in the least. There was pasture enough for my imagination. The low shrub oak plateau to which the opposite shore arose stretched away toward the prairies of the West and the steppes of Tartary, affording ample room for all the roving families of men. "There are none happy in the world but beings who enjoy freely a vast horizon,"—said Damodara, when his herds required new and larger pastures.

Both place and time were changed, and I dwelt nearer to those parts of the universe and to those eras in history which had most attracted me. Where I lived was as far off as many a region viewed nightly by astronomers. We are wont to imagine rare and delectable places in some remote and more celestial corner of the system, behind the constellation of Cassiopeia's Chair, far from noise and disturbance. I discovered that my house actually had its site in such a withdrawn, but forever new and unprofaned, part of the universe. If it were worth the while to settle in those parts near to the Pleiades or the

Hyades, to Aldebaran or Altair, then I was really there, or at an equal remoteness from the life which I had left behind, dwindled and twinkling with as fine a ray to my nearest neighbor, and to be seen only in moonless nights by him. Such was that part of creation where I had squatted; —

*"There was a shepherd that did live,  
And held his thoughts as high  
As were the mounts whereon his flocks  
Did hourly feed him by."*

What should we think of the shepherd's life if his flocks always wandered to higher pastures than his thoughts?

Every morning was a cheerful invitation to make my life of equal simplicity, and I may say innocence, with Nature herself. I have been as sincere a worshipper of Aurora as the Greeks. I got up early and bathed in the pond, that was a religious exercise, and one of the best things which I did. They say that characters were engraven on the bathing tub of King Tching-thang to this effect: "Renew thyself completely each day; do it again, and again, and forever again." I can understand that. Morning brings back the heroic ages. I was as much affected by the faint hum of a mosquito making its invisible and unimaginable tour through my apartment at earliest dawn, when I was sitting with door and windows open, as I could be by any trumpet that ever sang of fame. It was Homer's requiem; itself an Iliad and Odyssey in the air, singing its own wrath and wanderings. There was something cosmical about it; a standing advertisement, till forbidden, of the everlasting vigor and fertility of the world. The morning, which is the most memorable season of the day, is the awakening hour. Then there is least somnolence in us; and for an hour, at least, some part of us awakes which slumbers all the rest of the day and night. Little is to be expected of that day, if it can be called a day, to which we are not awakened by our Genius, but by the mechanical nudgings of some servitor, are not awakened by our own newly acquired force and aspirations from within, accompanied by the undulations of celestial music, instead of factory bells, and a fragrance filling the air — to a higher life than we fell asleep from; and thus the darkness bear its fruit, and prove itself to be good, no less than the light. That man who does not believe that each day contains an earlier, more sacred, and auroral hour than he has yet profaned, has despaired of life, and is pursuing a descending and darkening way. After a partial cessation of his sensuous life, the soul of man, or its organs rather, are reinvigorated each day, and his Genius tries again what noble life it can make. All memorable events, I should say, transpire in morning time and in a morning atmosphere.

The Vedas say, "All intelligences awake with the morning." Poetry and art, and the fairest and most memorable of the actions of men, date from such an hour. All poets and heroes, like Memnon, are the children of Aurora, and emit their music at sunrise. To him whose elastic and vigorous thought keeps pace with the sun, the day is a perpetual morning. It matters not what the clocks say or the attitudes and labors of men. Morning is when I am awake and there is a dawn in me. Moral reform is the effort to throw off sleep. Why is it that men give so poor an account of their day if they have not been slumbering? They are not such poor calculators. If they had not been overcome with drowsiness, they would have performed something. The millions are awake enough for physical labor, but only one in a million is awake enough for effective intellectual exertion, only one in a hundred millions to a poetic or divine life. To be awake is to be alive. I have never yet met a man who was quite awake. How could I have looked him in the face?

We must learn to reawaken and keep ourselves awake, not by mechanical aids, but by an infinite expectation of the dawn, which does not forsake us in our soundest sleep. I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor. It is something to be able to paint a particular picture, or to carve a statue, and so to make a few objects beautiful; but it is far more glorious to carve and paint the very atmosphere and medium through which we look, which morally we can do. To affect the quality of the day, that is the highest of arts. Every man is tasked to make his life, even in its details, worthy of the contemplation of his most elevated and critical hour. If we refused, or rather used up, such paltry information as we get, the oracles would distinctly inform us how this might be done.

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear, nor did I wish to practise resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world, or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion. For most men, it appears to me, are in a strange uncertainty about it, whether it is of the devil or of God, and have *somewhat hastily* concluded that it is the chief end of man here to "glorify God and enjoy him forever."

Still we live meanly, like ants; though the fable tells us that we were long ago changed into men; like pygmies we fight with cranes; it is error upon error, and clout upon clout, and our best virtue has for its occasion a superfluous and evitable wretchedness. Our life is frittered away by detail. An honest man has hardly need to count more than his ten fingers, or in extreme cases he may add his ten toes, and lump the rest. Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity! I say, let your affairs be as two or three, and not a hundred or a thousand; instead of a million count half a dozen, and keep your accounts on your thumb-nail. In the midst of this chopping sea of civilized life, such are the clouds and storms and quicksands and thousand-and-one items to be allowed for, that a man has to live, if he would not founder and go to the bottom and not make his port at all, by dead reckoning, and he must be a great calculator indeed who succeeds. Simplify, simplify. Instead of three meals a day, if it be necessary eat but one; instead of a hundred dishes, five; and reduce other things in proportion. Our life is like a German Confederacy, made up of petty states, with its boundary forever fluctuating, so that even a German cannot tell you how it is bounded at any moment. The nation itself, with all its so-called internal improvements, which, by the way are all external and superficial, is just such an unwieldy and overgrown establishment, cluttered with furniture and tripped up by its own traps, ruined by luxury and heedless expense, by want of calculation and a worthy aim, as the million households in the land; and the only cure for it, as for them, is in a rigid economy, a stern and more than Spartan simplicity of life and elevation of purpose. It lives too fast. Men think that it is essential that the *Nation* have commerce, and export ice, and talk through a telegraph, and ride thirty miles an hour, without a doubt, whether *they* do or not; but whether we should live like baboons or like men, is a little uncertain. If we do not get out sleepers, and forge rails, and devote days and nights to the work, but go to tinkering upon our *lives* to improve *them*, who will build railroads? And if railroads are not built, how shall we get to heaven in season? But if we stay at home and mind our business, who will want railroads? We do not ride on the railroad; it rides upon us. Did you ever think what those sleepers are that underlie the railroad? Each one is a man, an Irishman, or a Yankee man. The rails are laid on them, and they are covered with sand, and the cars run smoothly over them. They are sound sleepers, I assure you. And every few years a new lot is laid down and run over; so that, if some have the pleasure of riding on a rail, others have the misfortune to be ridden upon. And when they run over a man that is walking in his sleep, a supernumerary sleeper in the wrong position, and wake him up, they suddenly stop the cars, and make a hue and cry about it, as if this were an exception. I am glad to know that it takes a

gang of men for every five miles to keep the sleepers down and level in their beds as it is, for this is a sign that they may sometime get up again.

Why should we live with such hurry and waste of life? We are determined to be starved before we are hungry. Men say that a stitch in time saves nine, and so they take a thousand stitches to-day to save nine to-morrow. As for *work*, we haven't any of any consequence. We have the Saint Vitus' dance, and cannot possibly keep our heads still. If I should only give a few pulls at the parish bell-rope, as for a fire, that is, without setting the bell, there is hardly a man on his farm in the outskirts of Concord, notwithstanding that press of engagements which was his excuse so many times this morning, nor a boy, nor a woman, I might almost say, but would forsake all and follow that sound, not mainly to save property from the flames, but, if we will confess the truth, much more to see it burn, since burn it must, and we, be it known, did not set it on fire,—or to see it put out, and have a hand in it, if that is done as handsomely, yes, even if it were the parish church itself. Hardly a man takes a half-hour's nap after dinner, but when he wakes he holds up his head and asks, "What's the news?" as if the rest of mankind had stood his sentinels. Some give directions to be waked every half-hour, doubtless for no other purpose; and then, to pay for it, they tell what they have dreamed. After a night's sleep the news is as indispensable as the breakfast. "Pray tell me anything new that has happened to a man anywhere on this globe,"—and he reads it over his coffee and rolls, that a man has had his eyes gouged out this morning on the Wachito River; never dreaming the while that he lives in the dark unfathomed mammoth cave of this world, and has but the rudiment of an eye himself.

For my part, I could easily do without the post-office. I think that there are very few important communications made through it. To speak critically, I never received more than one or two letters in my life—I wrote this some years ago—that were worth the postage. The penny-post is, commonly, an institution through which you seriously offer a man that penny for his thoughts which is so often safely offered in jest. And I am sure that I never read any memorable news in a newspaper. If we read of one man robbed, or murdered, or killed by accident, or one house burned, or one vessel wrecked, or one steamboat blown up, or one cow run over on the Western Railroad, or one mad dog killed, or one lot of grasshoppers in the winter,—we never need read of another. One is enough. If you are acquainted with the principle, what do you care for a myriad instances and applications? To a philosopher all *news*, as it is called, is gossip, and they who edit and read it are old women over their tea. Yet not a few are greedy after this gossip. There was such a

rush, as I hear, the other day at one of the offices to learn the foreign news by the last arrival, that several large squares of plate glass belonging to the establishment were broken by the pressure,—news which I seriously think a ready wit might write a twelvemonth, or twelve years, beforehand with sufficient accuracy. As for Spain, for instance, if you know how to throw in Don Carlos and the Infanta, and Don Pedro and Seville and Granada, from time to time in the right proportions,—they may have changed the names a little since I saw the papers,—and serve up a bull-fight when other entertainments fail, it will be true to the letter, and give us as good an idea of the exact state or ruin of things in Spain as the most succinct and lucid reports under this head in the newspapers: and as for England, almost the last significant scrap of news from that quarter was the revolution of 1649, and if you have learned the history of her crops for an average year, you never need attend to that thing again, unless your speculations are of a merely pecuniary character. If one may judge who rarely looks into the newspapers, nothing new does ever happen in foreign parts, a French revolution not excepted.

What news! how much more important to know what that is which was never old! "Kieou-he-yu (great dignitary of the state of Wei) sent a man to Khoung-tseu to know his news Khoung-tseu caused the messenger to be seated near him, and questioned him in these terms What is your master doing? The messenger answered with respect My master desires to diminish the number of his faults, but he cannot come to the end of them. The messenger being gone, the philosopher remarked: What a worthy messenger! What a worthy messenger!" The preacher, instead of vexing the ears of drowsy farmers on their day of rest at the end of the week,—for Sunday is the fit conclusion of an ill-spent week, and not the fresh and brave beginning of a new one,—with this one other draggle-tail of a sermon, should shout with thundering voice, "Pause! Avast! Why so seeming fast, but deadly slow?"

Shams and delusions are esteemed for soundest truths, while reality is fabulous. If men would steadily observe realities only, and not allow themselves to be deluded, life, to compare it with such things as we know, would be like a fairy tale and the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. If we respected only what is inevitable and has a right to be, music and poetry would resound along the streets. When we are unhurried and wise, we perceive that only great and worthy things have any permanent and absolute existence, that petty fears and petty pleasures are but the shadow of the reality. This is always exhilarating and sublime. By closing the eyes and slumbering, and consenting to be deceived by shows, men establish and confirm their daily life of routine and habit everywhere, which still is built on purely illusory foundations. Children, who play life, discern its true

law and relations more clearly than men, who fail to live it worthily, but who think that they are wiser by experience, that is, by failure. I have read in a Hindoo book, that "there was a king's son, who, being expelled in infancy from his native city, was brought up by a forester, and, growing up to maturity in that state, imagined himself to belong to the barbarous race with which he lived. One of his father's ministers having discovered him, revealed to him what he was, and the misconception of his character was removed, and he knew himself to be a prince. So soul," continues the Hindoo philosopher, "from the circumstances in which it is placed, mistakes its own character, until the truth is revealed to it by some holy teacher, and then it knows itself to be *Brahme*." I perceive that we inhabitants of New England live this mean life that we do because our vision does not penetrate the surface of things. We think that that *is* which *appears* to be. If a man should walk through this town and see only the reality, where, think you, would the "Mill-dam" go to? If he should give us an account of the realities he beheld there, we should not recognize the place in his description. Look at a meeting-house, or a court-house, or a jail, or a shop, or a dwelling-house, and say what that thing really is before a true gaze, and they would all go to pieces in your account of them. Men esteem truth remote, in the outskirts of the system, behind the farthest star, before Adam and after the last man. In eternity there is indeed something true and sublime. But all these times and places and occasions are now and here. God himself culminates in the present moment, and will never be more divine in the lapse of all the ages. And we are enabled to apprehend at all what is sublime and noble only by the perpetual instilling and drenching of the reality that surrounds us. The universe constantly and obediently answers to our conceptions; whether we travel fast or slow, the track is laid for us. Let us spend our lives in conceiving then. The poet or the artist never yet had so fair and noble a design but some of his posterity at least could accomplish it.

Let us spend one day as deliberately as Nature, and not be thrown off the track by every nutshell and mosquito's wing that falls on the rails. Let us rise early and fast, or breakfast, gently and without perturbation; let company come and let company go, let the bells ring and the children cry,—determined to make a day of it. Why should we knock under and go with the stream? Let us not be upset and overwhelmed in that terrible rapid and whirlpool called a dinner, situated in the meridian shallows. Weather this danger and you are safe, for the rest of the way is down hill. With unrelaxed nerves, with morning vigor, sail by it, looking another way, tied to the mast like Ulysses. If the engine whistles, let it whistle till it is hoarse for its pains. If the bell rings, why should we run? We will consider what kind of music they are like. Let us settle ourselves, and work and

wedge our feet downward through the mud and slush of opinion, and prejudice, and tradition, and delusion, and appearance, that alluvion which covers the globe, through Paris and London, through New York and Boston and Concord, through Church and State, through poetry and philosophy and religion, till we come to a hard bottom and rocks in place, which we can call *reality*, and say, This is, and no mistake, and then begin, having a *point d'appui*, below freshet and frost and fire, a place where you might found a wall or a state, or set a lamp-post safely, or perhaps a gauge, not a Nilometer, but a Realometer, that future ages might know how deep a freshet of shams and appearances had gathered from time to time. If you stand right fronting and face to face to a fact, you will see the sun glimmer on both its surfaces, as if it were a cimeter, and feel its sweet edge dividing you through the heart and marrow, and so you will happily conclude your mortal career. Be it life or death, we crave only reality. If we are really dying, let us hear the rattle in our throats and feel cold in the extremities, if we are alive, let us go about our business.

Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in I drink at it, but while I drink I see the sandy bottom and detect how shallow it is. Its thin current slides away, but eternity remains. I would drink deeper; fish in the sky, whose bottom is pebbly with stars. I cannot count one. I know not the first letter of the alphabet I have always been regretting that I was not as wise as the day I was born. The intellect is a cleaver, it discerns and rifts its way into the secret of things. I do not wish to be any more busy with my hands than is necessary. My head is hands and feet. I feel all my best faculties concentrated in it. My instinct tells me that my head is an organ for burrowing, as some creatures use their snout and fore paws, and with it I would mine and burrow my way through these hills. I think that the richest vein is somewhere hereabouts; so by the divining-rod and thin rising vapors I judge; and here I will begin to mine.



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*P A R T III*

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***EXPERIENCE AND  
AUDIENCE ANALYSIS:  
THE PERSUASIVE MODE***

If description easily lends itself to the colorings of personal beliefs and attitudes, then an author's beliefs and attitudes may do more than convey his sense of an experience. Writers often aim to make their readers **share** that sense; they may attempt to manipulate their experiences (or evidence) in order to persuade their audience to a particular point of view. Thus, in the last section, Thoreau places instructions on conduct and attitude among his descriptive and narrative sentences. Persuasive language makes up a very large portion of the total barrage to which a normal per-

son is exposed: information is almost always accompanied by instructions on what to do with it, and/or why such conduct is desirable. Persuasive prose is practically the sole rhetorical staple of advertising copy and political tracts and speeches. Magazine and newspaper editorials are not primarily repositories of facts, but occasions for the audience to see selected facts in a perspective held desirable by the writer.

Persuasive devices are neither good nor bad in themselves; they are simply devices. One may be competent in a given field, and use that competence to persuade his audience toward attitudes or acts which are defensible when measured against social, ethical, or aesthetic values. Requests for research money to advance knowledge are frequently charged with persuasive techniques; but nevertheless Congressional allocations for research have facilitated man's increase of knowledge. Further, this rapid expansion of knowledge may not have come about had it not been for adequate use of proper persuasive devices, for not all persuasive devices are equal in effectiveness. Often the subtlety with which a device is used may account for its success or failure. The connection between a new car, a glamorous career, and marriage to a New York high-fashion model may not appear to the audience immediately. But on the other hand, if signs enjoined the audience to "Buy a Mustang," the syntactic affinity to such locutions as "Keep off the grass" would be too obvious.

The selling metaphor is a good one to keep in mind. Regardless of the reader's attitude toward the civil rights movement, Robert Coles, in our next section, must keep the reader's attention long enough to have any hope of making his case. Persuasive prose, to be effective, must not alienate the sender from the receiver. One way of heightening the sense of reliability in an argument is to present evidence, to make a kind of "truth claim." Persuasive arguments do not overemphasize points detrimental to the desired conclusions, but they may acknowledge, or allude to such detrimental points in order to lessen the resistance of an audience to whom such points are known.

Students find themselves confronted by persuasive language and persuasive devices now, just as they will throughout their lives. In their classes, in their social contacts, in their economic lives, they are constantly being persuaded, or are attempting to persuade. The rustling-about moments before the end of class is a persuasive technique: perhaps the professor will dismiss the class a few minutes before the bell. Even one's dress, or one's personal appearance, must be recognized as part of the language of persuasion: if I wear a suit, shave close, and have my hair barbered in such and such a way, I take a persuasive stance vis-à-vis a host of social values. And if I wear my sweat-shirt and sandals to a wedding reception, I am saying something else. Per-

suasion is always part of a social context, and involves choice with respect to some audience. For instance, much dress and language is meant to save time. My attire and the way I talk persuades those I meet quickly to identify me with the values I have just conveyed in my presentation. The "hippie" musician doesn't waste time deciding who among his new acquaintances are "with it" and who aren't; he processes the data presented by the package, and responds appropriately.

The editorial in the student newspaper is not the only use of persuasive technique the student will recognize. If he becomes a junior executive, he will begin "selling" himself to his superiors. Persuasion and selling are linguistically and culturally the same thing. Thus, he will try to sell his superiors on such and such a policy, or to persuade the company toward certain options as distinct from others. Even silence may be part of the rhetoric of persuasion, as anyone who has reflected on romantic behavior may have noticed. When to speak and when not to speak is a most important choice to make in any persuasive situation. What to put in and what to leave out of a persuasive paper is just such a choice. But if the writer imagines that his professor is a close-minded idiot, not ready to entertain the argument he is now presenting, he will not increase the force of his argument by saying so. Good argument depends on an honest appraisal of the audience, and an intelligent estimate of the appropriate means to reach that audience.

The point is that the doctrine of appropriateness is not only an aristocratic abstraction, it is a social norm. One's wife would not ordinarily be the proper audience for impassioned complaints on the oppressive standard of marital monogamy. I may hate the chief executive of the corporation that employs me, but if I insulted his wife at a cocktail party, I would raise more questions about myself than about her excessive drinking.

Remember the selling metaphor: where there is a seller there must also be a buyer. Successful persuasion is based on a heightening of the sense that the interest of both parties is the same. **A propos** of the student theme, the successful student simply keeps his audience in mind, making appropriate choices for subjects. Plagiarism is only one very obvious violation of the doctrine of appropriateness (and if there is evidence of the likelihood of discovery, a further evidence of pathology); apple-polishing is the other extreme of insult. Persuasive tact usually involves neither talking up nor down to one's audience. Effective persuasion presupposes mutual trust.

One can trust his audience without becoming a spineless sycophant. There is no reason that one cannot hold opinions firmly, and still remain an effective, even persuasive protagonist. Harry Caudill shows his impatience, even his anger; and George P. Eliot has rather devastating things to say about his opposition. The

question is **how** these attitudes are conveyed. Russell Lynes, for example, leaves almost no one unspared in his attack on the follies and pretensions of the lower, middle, and upper classes. But does he alienate his audience? And what is his audience? Again, W. T. Stace begins his essay by stating "For my part I believe in no religion at all." Does this mean, then, that he separates himself from every reader who professes belief? If he is writing only for those who agree with him, what would be the purpose of persuasion?

# THE QUESTION OF NEGRO CRIME

ROBERT COLES, M.D.



You will, I hope, ask right off whether there is indeed Negro crime, specific and special. Or is it a fragment of irrational racism to link persons who commit crimes to their skin color?

I have asked this question many times. Back in 1960, as a hospital resident completing my training in psychiatry, I worked with delinquent boys in Boston. Among them I found more than a fair share of troubled young Negroes with criminal records as long and dismaying as their homes were poor and chaotic. Earlier, I had spent two years as an Air Force psychiatrist at a base near Biloxi, Mississippi. There I happened to see a "swim-in" and the fierce assaults upon those Negroes who tried to bathe from a segregated beach along the Gulf of Mexico. The experience gave me a sharp awareness of the severe social stress caused by segregation. In 1961 Atlanta decided to admit ten Negro children to four previously all-white high schools. My wife and I moved to Atlanta and I have spent the last two years there—and in other Southern cities—studying Negro children in recently desegregated schools. I have also interviewed many of their white classmates, their teachers, and families. I was trying, primarily, to find out how they felt and how they managed what was a major crisis in all their lives.

In the process I got to know a great variety of people, ranging from valiant young Negro veterans of sit-ins to passionately convinced

segregationists. Strangely, one bond among these antagonistic people was a common concern with Negro crime.

Segregationists spoke of their fears. Negroes are dangerous, they insisted; they are criminals—real or potential; they are drunken, syphilitic, drug-addicted, knife-wielding, promiscuous, razor-cutting. Their captured thieves and violent criminals fill our courtrooms

Negroes, too, are afraid. "It's a fact," said one young man in Selma, Alabama, "our people get arrested more, and we do more crime even by ourselves, when the white leaves us alone, than any other people."

Some may prefer to deny this fact, to insist—under the guise of egalitarian thinking—that crimes are done by individuals and that it is not a race's history or a kind of culture but private passions and sorrows which generate them. Of course it is dangerous to overlook *any* of the causes of crime. There are many miles from a particular child's birth to his later felony and each child travels a very different road. It may be pitted with chances of trouble because he was born retarded, poor or Negro. Or he may be white and wealthy but grow up in a harsh environment created by disturbed parents. We must see each criminal whole—from birth to misdeed—hoping to discover why he, particularly, went astray. But this does not mean that we should ignore certain common experiences among criminals. There are circumstances, today, in which crime in one form or another appears to be the only career open to a colored man.

I am thinking, for example, of a Georgia Negro family of nine. Ronnie, the youngest, has made history by desegregating a white school, and he has done well academically. He has also demonstrated before numerous stores and theatres and has spent his vacation helping Negroes to vote in rural counties where brutal police actions occur almost daily. Georgia arrests and jails youths for encouraging American citizens to register, enter a library, or eat in a drugstore, so Ronnie runs the risk of imprisonment. But we would not call him "criminal." However he has two criminal brothers, and two others close to following their lead. The oldest one has committed an assortment of minor offenses, including stealing a car; another brother is in jail for "breaking and entering" a white home. The two younger brothers drink heavily, are employed intermittently in humble jobs, and consider themselves lucky for having them.

This is a sad, unsettling spectacle, because the family, though poor, is in many ways proper and certainly religious. Three girls are now married. They have babies of their own but—following a tradition that survives out of necessity—they go daily to do housework in white homes. Their husbands work, though at no great wages; two of them are high-school graduates and one goes to college by night.

Ronnie represents his family's one great hope. In the course of my studies, I tape-recorded a number of interviews. Here is a fragment of what Ronnie's mother said to me: "We plans for Ronnie to be straight and to stay away from the police, because he's been sent to us at the right time. I thinks he's going to be the first one to walk with his head up, and if you can do that and keep yourself a good job, and if you can live and go where you pleases, you're not going to any jail. I prays to God I lives to see the day all our children have what Ronnie is having."

Recently another young Negro student whom I have watched in many a sit-in came to New York. Walking in Harlem he and a white friend were attacked and robbed by a small band of Negro boys. Back in Atlanta they both were discouraged. What, they asked, was the point of freedom for people still chained by their plundered past and by a society still closed to them in many important respects? They were aware now that a lunch counter here and a movie house there were only a start. Their work would be useless if it were not followed by many other changes.

### *"THEY PUT YOU AWAY"*

In a Mississippi town where I lived for a while I used to watch the local judge presiding in his court. It was two courts, actually. Segregated seating was a mere formality. The real separation was in the stern punishment meted out to whites who offended whites and the kindly, permissive treatment accorded Negroes who assaulted Negroes. Obviously this judge felt that small children must be indulged, that what was a crime for a white was in a Negro the bluster and silliness of the very young. In cross-racial cases the relationship of adult and child persisted: parents must be allowed to discipline their children, even mistakenly; hence whites can generally assault Negroes with little fear of the consequences. Children, however, need firm controls and must learn obedience; hence any Negro assaulting a white's person or property must be quickly put in his place.

This kind of segregated justice is not confined to the rural South. In Chicago, a policeman friend told me that much Negro crime there was simply ignored and unreported. It was accepted as the daily life of the Negro ghetto. Police and their cars, he maintained, skimmed only the surface of that desperate territory, intent mainly on containing the most open violence. "We don't go near a lot of those blocks if we can help it," he said.

Not long ago, a reporter in another Northern city told me that much Negro violence is simply overlooked. Otherwise the paper

would be full of it almost every day, he explained. Southern papers often try the same deceptions, too. For some of them *any* Negro news is unworthy unless it explicitly confirms ancient fears.

In the course of my two-year research venture, from 1961 to 1963, I studied Negro children in the major cities where schools were being desegregated. Most of them—as they learned to trust me—referred constantly to Little Rock, New Orleans, or Oxford. Those mob scenes had seized their daily notice, then retired into the “forgetfulness” of dreams.

For instance, one Negro girl who had led her race into a white high school in Atlanta told me she often dreamed of Little Rock or Clinton. “I don’t think there’s a Negro in America who hasn’t had a nightmare about Little Rock,” she said. “I was eleven then and we’d come home from school and my granddaddy would be sitting there watching the news. He would tell us what had happened and say he hoped we never went through it. But my mother would take exception. She hoped it would happen right here in Atlanta.”

Later, in New Orleans, a six-year-old boy expressed it somewhat differently. Every month for two years I drove to his home through littered and unpaved streets either impossibly muddy or sun-dried and caked with dust. Lining the streets were the shabby, makeshift houses of the poor. In wet spells the roofs leaked and their ceilings were a map of past accidents. In cold spells the houses were overheated by aging gas burners, some of which exploded as regularly as winter came, setting fires and killing like a guerrilla enemy. Inside, the houses were usually crowded with people and barren of solid, useful furniture. The walls boasted no bookshelves, no art but the cheesecake photography of innumerable calendars. These were both decorative and informative. They emphasized time, and were supplied by insurance men who bargain with it or morticians who profit from its ravages.

For some months Jimmy and I had been drawing and playing together. In his pictures he expressed his fear of the police and the hated, mean-spirited white world whose powerful wrath he must avoid.

Jimmy’s brother was in jail for his part in a recent sit-in. One day Jimmy drew a picture of his brother’s room. He put a calendar in it, and then drew another larger one on another part of the paper. I asked him why. “Jackie is doing his time,” he explained. “So we have to cross out the days until he gets home. . . . I hope I’ll never cross those police. They beat you, and if you try what Jackie did, they put you away.”

Jimmy told me he was afraid he might be arrested on a double count—because he was going to a white school, and because he was his brother’s brother. Jimmy never developed any medical or psychi-



atric symptoms despite his fears. He is nine now and is learning to be law-abiding.

After an absence of several months, I stopped in briefly. We talked for a while. Suddenly he asked whether I had been arrested lately. Not lately, or ever, I told him. He looked puzzled and remarked: "I thought they arrested whites just like us if they take the colored side."

Around this time, the nephew of the Mayor of Chicago was attacked by some Negroes who shouted, "This is for Birmingham." What these youths did, many others dream about. This, in a way, is what the segregationists fear. "Give them all those things and they'll cut our throats."

Who can deny this wrinkled and dried grain of truth? Unquestionably Negroes in the South are more afraid of the white world and hence less criminal toward it. When they move North, to New York and Chicago, Washington and Los Angeles, the terror is lessened. Vengeance is no longer restricted to one another. Now they can wreak it upon the white world. The difference, as anyone who has lived in the South knows, is in those colorfully uniformed Mississippi state police fingering automatic rifles. The difference also is the laws and judges in the South to whom these soldiers of "order" bring their clients.

Those police, those laws and judges are bent on keeping Negroes "in their place." They define Negro criminality as any attempt by any Negro to leave that dreary "place" for better territory.

### *"WHAT ARE THEY UP TO?"*

Segregated, voteless, frequently outraged in their dignity and integrity, many Negroes have had less recognition and protection than common criminals. Even our rankest white blackguards are seldom judged as less than human. The Negroes respond to this treatment with despair which is sometimes mobilized into anger. Nowadays it may be expressed in direct retaliation.

Even where the Negro can vote, where his right to unprejudiced employment and housing is protected by state laws, he is caught in a painful dilemma. For he is achieving his rights at a time when the whole country faces severe problems: automation in the midst of rising population; threats from abroad which require harnessing a large share of the economy to arms; inadequate education for many children, regardless of race; and a lack of suitable housing and medical care for millions.

The frontier for the newly emancipated Negro is a city ghetto or a fading rural economy. Yet his new freedom has given him a

new awareness of how much still remains to be won. Precariously employed, he is bewildered by his sudden right to vote, or to enter the finest restaurants or theatres. A Negro farm hand in Mississippi who picked Delta cotton told me it would probably take a week's salary for him to get into one of those restaurants, if in some millenium he should ever be able to do so. Then he added, "I suppose we'll sooner get the vote. But to be honest I don't think I'll ever get myself to have the courage to go and do it. Maybe my children, maybe they'll do it."

Others distrust the distant if real sympathy of their white suburban "friends" or the eager white classmates who sometimes strive so hard to help. "What are they *up* to?" one hears so often, a firm reminder that years of repression breed suspicions which stick fast.

### THE BLACK MUSLIMS' PULL

While the old sense of being outlawed persists, the "new freedom" has made it possible, for the first time, to strike back. The Negro students who walk alone into white schools are glad to have a chance to fight in a useful and sensible way. But other children turn instead to delinquency and crime.

"They tell us we need more education," a Negro father in Atlanta told me, shaking his head. "Well, I've got a college degree and it isn't worth much to me. I'd rather be illiterate and white." Then he said angrily that he hoped his son never saw a white man again.

A student, a veteran of many sit-ins, put it this way: "Yes, we're getting the white man off our backs, but he's still around us, blocking us, and we don't know where we can go."

I have talked with some Black Muslims and attended their meetings. Although I have no special knowledge of them, their disenchantment with the white world is clear. I imagine there is a touch of their thinking, and more than a touch of their feeling, in many Negroes. What interests me particularly is how heavily they draw upon Negro convicts and ex-convicts. We have heard of their surprising success in turning desperate outlaws into clean, law-abiding, and even puritanical members of a militant sect.

Perhaps these criminals who are now Black Muslims explain much about the causes of Negro crime and the chances for its reduction. In jails across the country few Negro criminals have been rehabilitated by severe punishment. Nor have many been salvaged by modern penology or the social sciences. But they have, it seems, been changed by daily assembly in mutual support and respect as well as in sanctioned hate. Improvement seems to follow some sense

of shared worth as Negroes, some chance to express fully and publicly their despair and rage at what it has been like to be colored.

All Negroes—from the most respectable to the most criminal—share a past which has been a progression of crimes by others upon them. We do not call them “crimes”; they are instead “part of our history.” But Negroes have, in fact, been abducted, then stripped of all rights of citizenship or humanity, finally used as chattel.

I summon the painful facts of Negro history in the tradition of modern psychiatry. Freud’s great concern with the sources and development of human behavior led him into his patients’ earliest days and into the lives of their parents and grandparents. Similarly, we must examine what has preceded the lives of today’s Negroes, and particularly of Negro criminals. Their past will show that, wittingly or not, we have fostered Negro criminality, not only by enslaving, oppressing, and segregating Negroes, but by assuming that they are naturally criminal, naturally infantile—something less than adult.

Through the sit-ins, the picketing going on all over our country, Negroes are now saying to whites, “Brother, here I am—an adult like you.” Such affirmations, however, are only the beginning. As the next step, the Negro youth must truly realize his freedom, he must leave to pursue it in his own life and through his deeds. If he is able to do so—at work, at school, at the polls, in a home of his own choosing—he can return the genuine adult, bringing with him the new satisfactions of his grown self. If he cannot do this, if there is no opportunity to do this, both he and his nation are in trouble.

# MISDEAL IN APPALACHIA

HARRY M. CAUDILL



Appalachia is a region as large as all Great Britain and the home of fifteen million Americans. Once, long ago, it was green and rich. For years it has been sick and now it is dying, a charity patient of affluent America.

Conscience-ridden by Appalachia's old and numerous social and economic ills, the federal government has enacted into law the Appalachian Regional Development Act, a program two years in the drafting and hailed by its sponsors as the cure for Appalachia. The act is a grim hoax. It won't restore Appalachia and its millions of poor to health and hope; more likely it will speed their descent into the depths of despair.

President Kennedy was deeply distressed by the destitution and demoralization he encountered in West Virginia during the preferential primary in 1960. He created the President's Appalachian Regional Commission (PARC), to consult with the governors of the eleven states having counties in the Appalachian Mountains and to formulate a regional program calculated to bring prosperity to the jaded highland communities.

There is every reason to believe that President Kennedy sincerely desired to aid the area and that President Johnson has come to share his concern. But both President Johnson and the Congress appear to have assumed that the commission's recommendations as embodied in the act constitute a comprehensive redevelopment program. The

assumption is unfounded, and both the President and the Congress have been sold a bill of shoddy goods.

The President's Appalachian Regional Commission was headed by Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., Undersecretary of Commerce. It held extensive hearings and made every effort to devise a program acceptable to the states involved. Unfortunately, the commission seems to have decided at an early date that gaining acceptance of the program by the governors was more important than finding effective solutions. To placate the governors, some of whom showed little initial enthusiasm for the project, the commission revived the hoary theory of nullification. Each state was authorized to veto any proposal which it deemed unsatisfactory, whether advanced by Washington or by another state. This new partnership arrangement, by which the federal government provides the lion's share (80 percent) of the money and the state governments (whose historic dereliction brought about most of the trouble) get the lion's share of the resulting political credit, was hailed by PARC and Appalachian congressmen as a significant advance in state-federal relationships.

The state-veto provision is of doubtful constitutionality. It is unlikely, however, that the veto will have to be invoked, because there is little in the planned program that could arouse the ire of a governor, let alone kindle hope in the thousands of impoverished mountaineers.

The redevelopment scheme produced by PARC is not only bland; it borders on the insignificant. Appalachia is a mammoth island of backwardness, and millions of its people are paupers. Impressive as it may appear to those who have to pay it in taxes, the \$1 billion to be spent for the region's supposed rehabilitation is little more than a drop of aid in a bucket of need.

Roving reporters and probing television cameras have brought the face of Appalachian misery into every American living room. The bleak hillsides, the gray mining camps, the littered roadsides, the rickety houses, and the tattered, dispirited people have haunted millions. Shocked Americans everywhere have demanded that Appalachia be rescued by the government that found it possible to rescue Europe with the Marshall Plan and to nourish the once desolate Tennessee Valley through the TVA.

What most people may not suspect is that Appalachia has two faces. They have seen the face of Appalachian poverty. The face of Appalachian affluence has remained discreetly out of view. Absenteeism and anonymity curtain the vast domain of giant corporations which own the region's wealth.

The nation's great steel and manufacturing corporations—including United States Steel, Inland Steel, Bethlehem Steel, Republic Steel,

Jones & Laughlin, and International Harvester—own immense boundaries of coal, oil, gas, limestone, and other minerals, which were bought cheaply from their original owners nearly three quarters of a century ago and have been held ever since at little more than nominal taxation.

State and local taxing officials have bowed to the ancient argument that to impose fair levies on the extractive industries "will kill the goose that lays the golden egg" For example, eight years ago Pittsburgh-Consolidation Coal Corporation sold a part of its eastern Kentucky holdings to a subsidiary of Bethlehem Steel. The purchase price was nearly \$16 million, but the assessed valuation of the same property was less than \$4 million. These corporations and their allies, the electric utilities, the railroads, the huge real estate corporations, and the coal-mining companies, have a gigantic stake in the status quo.

Not all state and local officials are uncaring about Appalachia's ills, but in sum the state and local governments are little more than fronts for the absentee corporations which control the economic destinies of the region. The wealth—and it is almost immeasurable—is in "foreign" ownership as surely as are most of the riches of Central America.

The power of the region's economic overlords was demonstrated in the West Virginia legislature in 1953. Governor William Casey Marland struggled unsuccessfully to persuade the assembly to levy a general fund tax on the privilege of severing coal and other nonrenewable resources from the state. Today an indigent coal miner must pay a tax for the privilege of removing a loaf of bread from a grocer's shelf, but the world's largest steel corporation can remove trainloads of coal daily from the Appalachian hills without paying a tax for the right to do so.

Economically, Appalachia is little more than an internal colonial appendage of the industrial North and Midwest. Its plight is worse than that of a banana republic receiving U.S. foreign aid. Its exploitative economy generates much wealth and much poverty. The wealth flows to distant cities; the poverty accumulates at home. Like Latin America, Appalachia can find no relief for its dilemma until there is far-reaching tax reform and an overhaul of the antiquated political structure. But here the parallel ends. In the Alliance for Progress program, Washington insists on Latin-American reform as the price of aid. For Appalachia, Washington has devised a plan of relief that will leave the old pattern unchanged. While the politicians can speak piously of Appalachian rejuvenation, they lack the guts to break the iron vise that grips the territory and its inhabitants. Any basic change in the situation would send wrathful reverberations through the boardrooms of dozens of huge firms.

PARC in its joint labors with the state governments discovered that whatever aimed at effective reorganization of the decrepit econ-

omy ran afoul of the entrenched absentee-owned interests and the political power structure which they dominate. So the search turned toward palliatives rather than remedies. The commission decided to spend \$840 million in five years on new highways and access roads. The construction of roads will make it even easier for the non-resident owners to market their minerals and timber. Roads are popular with the mountaineers, too, so more than 80 percent of the money could go for this one item with seemingly happy results.

The remaining funds are allocated at the rate of \$41,000,000 for hospital construction, \$28,000,000 for hospital maintenance, \$16,000,000 for the building of vocational schools, \$5,000,000 for development of timber stands, \$6,000,000 for sewage-treatment systems, \$36,500,000 for reclamation of strip-mined lands, and \$2,400,000 for administration. None of these measures strikes at the real roots of Appalachia's troubles. They will not restore health, because the malaise is too critical.

The redevelopment program is noteworthy because of its glaring omissions. Appalachia is a beautiful country whose major resource is bituminous coal. Its wooded hills are stuffed with the fuel, and mining has shaped its tragic history. Any effort to revitalize this region without giving serious attention to the chaotic coal industry is nonsensical.

Until about 1948 coal was an immense industry, the counterpart of steel. As a mass employer, it was beset by oil and gas and advancing mining technology, and collapsed abruptly. Scores of coal companies were forced out of business in the 1950s, and those remaining in operation were compelled to mechanize to an astonishing degree. Thus hordes of industrial workmen were left stranded in the mining communities. They were men who had been educated for the mines; their communities were poorly built and were without decent schools, hospitals, or roads. In the last decade the jerrybuilt communities have turned into people-sties. The land is scarred with crumbling shacks, tipples, commissaries, and culm heaps. The demoralized people, long dependent on public assistance for their bread, have littered the roadsides and streams with countless automobile hulks and trash dumps. The creeks and rivers are reeking sewers.

Many miners earn a subsistence living digging coal with hand tools from thin seams. These "dog-hole" operations lack the protection of the federal mine safety code and are in a hopeless competition with strip mines and the large mechanized pits. The land is being ripped apart by surface miners. Simply put, the region's main source of income, its coal industry, borders on anarchy. PARC, however, blandly ignored this salient fact.

The commission might have recommended a giant cleanup campaign for Appalachia; without this, it is impossible to see how the morale of the people can be restored. Children growing up in the

incredible squalor of the typical mining community fall naturally into the ruinous, sometimes rapacious habits of their elders. Yet the possibility of clearing away the befouled landscape was not even considered.

The rest of the nation has cause for alarm in the pollution constantly emanating from this tortured region. Some five hundred gigantic culm heaps—man-made mountains of mining wastes and low-grade coal—containing millions of tons of fuel, are forever burning. Their acrid fumes cloak countless valleys. Simultaneously, billions of gallons of sulfuric acid water drain daily from unsealed mines and open coal auger holes. These nauseous contaminants must be restrained if Appalachia is to shed its grim reputation. A feeble start toward this goal is authorized by the legislation, but the task will be hard, and its ultimate cost will be high indeed.

The zooming American population gives Appalachia a genuine potential as a recreation area, but this potential is being aborted by the ravages of strip mining. New machines, including the giant rubber-tire high lifts now coming on the market, make it certain that surface mines will multiply and that their onslaught upon the land will quicken. A feeble gesture at alleviating this murder of the land is proposed in the legislation, but an amendment to the bill limits reclamation to publicly owned land. Since nearly all the torn earth is privately owned, the section dealing with strip mining is without practical meaning. According to the testimony of Pennsylvania Governor William Scranton, a quarter of a million acres of land in his state have already been ruined. Unless strip mining is prohibited in the near future, the coalfields will be churned into total wreckage.

The coal industry urgently needs a stable year-round market. Such a market is available, but PARC and Congress are ignoring it. The Edison Electric Institute has estimated that \$175 billion will have to be invested in new electricity-generating facilities within twenty years if a power shortage is to be averted. The trend in the electric-power industry is toward large mine-mouth generators, the power going to market by extra-high-voltage transmission lines. Such plants could be constructed in Appalachia with their power output carried cheaply and efficiently into all the great cities east of the Mississippi. The American Public Power Association, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, and a research group sponsored by Lockheed Space and Missile Company have concluded that these plants are feasible and that their product could be profitably marketed. And a small developmental royalty of perhaps one half mill per kilowatt hour produced would plow hundreds of millions of dollars back into regional facilities and services within a decade or two. Thus Appalachia could in large measure finance its own rehabilitation.

Such plants would make cheap power available everywhere in the



Appalachian range. The lakes created to provide cooling water for the huge coal-burning generators would curtail the ravages of floods, simultaneously supplying water for new industries which the low-cost electricity would attract to the area. As in the Tennessee Valley, the lakes would bring fishermen, sportsmen, and vacationers. The modern trinity—electricity, water, and fertilizer—which has wrought such miracles for the TVA, is sorely needed in the valleys of Appalachia, but PARC and the Congress refused to learn from the nation's first great and successful attempt to rejuvenate a dying segment of the country

To its credit, PARC considered electric-power development as a means of aiding the region's economy and requested congressional authorization for a full-scale power study. The Congress, goaded by lobbyists for the private power interests, moved with alacrity in the opposite direction and expressly prohibited the use of Appalachian Redevelopment Funds for the generation, transmission, or sale of electricity. Thus Appalachia, a land of heavy rainfall and vast coal reserves, is denied the blessings of cheap power—blessings bestowed by federal action on the Tennessee Valley and most of the West

The great need of the Appalachian people is education. The schools everywhere are poor, often abominable. Most of America's one-room schools are in highland counties, 40 percent of them in eastern Kentucky alone. The adult illiteracy rate is appallingly high. Teachers' salaries average about \$1000 per year under national averages. The best teachers moved away years ago. The states refuse to levy severance taxes on minerals for the support of the schools. New generations are born into the old relentless cycle of poor people, poor schools, poor job preparation, poor pay, more poor people. Yet except for a modest appropriation for vocational education, PARC made no recommendations for improvement of the public schools. As matters now stand, the Administration's pending aid-to-education bill offers more long-range hope to the mountaineers than do PARC's remedial measures.

Another notion that a serious program would have embraced is the concept of new towns. At least two thirds of the existing housing is dilapidated. Much of the populace is spread out in string towns that stretch up the winding creek valleys. Other tens of thousands are clustered in crumbling coal camps. All these communities lack adequate water supplies, and the available water is generally polluted. In fact, public health officials in one typical eastern Kentucky county recently estimated that 76 percent of the drinking water is "grossly contaminated." It is practically impossible to service the communities with adequate public facilities. Student transportation alone is a back-breaking burden on the meager school systems. The roads are for the

most part ribbons of mud, and if new ones are built, maintenance costs will be extremely high. The people spread out in this fashion years ago when "new ground" farming was their principal livelihood. Now farming is *passé*. Even the family vegetable garden is disappearing. No valid justification for living on rough and isolated creeks exist at the present time.

By every reasonable standard the people would be far better off living in towns, where the amenities of life could be supplied at bearable costs. A few well-planned, solidly built, and strongly organized new municipalities would absorb much of the present dwindling population and would bring new talent into the region. Both the Atomic Energy Commission and the Tennessee Valley Authority have had experience in building new cities. Their experience could have been invaluable in any undertaking to organize, house, and service the Appalachian population properly. The "new town" concept was urged upon PARC as an obvious and much-needed remedial measure, but those bold planners wasted no thought upon it.

The provision for building and financing hospitals is a patent absurdity. New Hospitals can be built, and under some circumstances funds can be made available for their operation, but existing hospitals cannot be aided. Ten hospitals owned by Appalachian Regional Hospitals, Incorporated, were brought from the United Mine Workers of America's Health and Welfare Fund with federal money advanced by the Area Redevelopment Administration. This nonprofit corporation has done an excellent job of administering the hospital chain, maintaining superb standards and paying union wages to its employees. It has begun to operate in the black despite a fantastically high charity load. Yet these institutions—the best public facilities in Appalachia—are threatened with extinction for lack of operating capital. The administrators of the Appalachian Regional Development Act will be powerless to aid them. They may be compelled to watch these immensely beneficial hospitals close for lack of funds while simultaneously financing the construction of others.

An effort to obtain an amendment beneficial to satisfactory existing hospitals brought stern admonitions from PARC and congressional sponsors of the act that no changes could be tolerated, not even so much as "a single comma." However, when it came to another matter, Senator Robert Kennedy of New York was not deterred by such notions. His amendment to add thirteen relatively prosperous New York counties to Appalachia was promptly approved, and by legislative fiat the prosperous inhabitants of comparatively scrubbed upstate New York cities and towns became fellow sufferers with the miserable people of the Cumberland Plateau.

Paradoxically, not all of Appalachia is poor. There are "growth centers" within the region which are prosperous by national norms.

In these areas—for example, Kingsport, Tennessee—industry has begun to diversify. Bank deposits are high. Schools, hospitals, libraries, and other public facilities and services are good by Appalachian standards. These islands of affluence in a sea of poverty grow as much by attracting people from other parts of America as by drawing highlanders out of the surrounding countryside. A cruel provision in the legislation requires all the development funds to be spent in such a manner as to expedite the expansion of these fortunate centers of prosperity and growth. The fact that only a relative handful of mountaineers live there did not deter PARC's planners. The growth of a few small cities will not affect the tens of thousands of people stranded in such abysmal backwaters as Hellier, Kentucky, and Stonega, Virginia.

Sorely needed is a plan of development based on the total environment of Appalachia, a plan that indexes and utilizes all its resources of people, soil, water, timber, and minerals to build a viable economy and a healthy social order for the entire territory. The accentuation of a spotty prosperity will make the rich wealthier still without alleviating the misery of the poor. This is a reversal of American policy in the development of the Tennessee Valley and of our great Western territories. Here is a new national policy which declares that when an American region falls into misfortune, only a few of the people and only a part of the land will be rescued, with the aid going to those who need it least.

What, then, will be the consequence of this loudly trumpeted legislation for putting more than \$1 billion of taxpayers' money into Appalachia? If we ask, in a paraphrase of John Kennedy, not what it will do for us but for our country, the answer has to be a dismal one. The future of Appalachia is bleak indeed. The absentee landlords are pillaging the countryside of its coal, oil, gas, and timber. With the exception of a few counties in Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and North Carolina, little of value is being manufactured anywhere in the huge territory. PARC's scheme will accelerate the bleeding of resources without relieving the region's most pressing ills. The hopes of the people have been stirred. Disillusionment is sure to follow. The old people are dying. The young are leaving. The middle-aged subsist on the dole. In the estimation of the corporations that control the resources, most of the inhabitants are simply superfluous. Their lands are worn out. They possess no skills that the nation needs. Perhaps if they are retrained, they, too, will go away and stop bothering the public conscience. Appalachia is becoming a dark island near the heart of America, peopled in large measure by benumbed human relics and totally despoiled of its natural resources.

Perhaps the superhighways the governors, PARC, and Congress have prescribed will bring some tourists to shake their heads sadly over this end result of man's greed and folly. It has been said that

Appalachia, like Rip Van Winkle, slept through an entire age. Its backwoods people went to sleep in the agricultural age and were little disturbed until the dawn of the age of cybernetics.

Perhaps so. In any event, those who had hoped for a meaningful Appalachian development program as far-reaching and revolutionary as was TVA thirty years ago have been bitterly disappointed. Unless Congress takes a new look at its number one trouble spot and unless the American public is aroused as the people of England were aroused over the fate of Wales forty years ago, Appalachia can go back to sleep—the sodden sleep of the impoverished, the embittered, and the hopeless.

# AGAINST PORNOGRAPHY

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Pornography is like a squalid, unnecessary little country which owes its independence to a vagary of history. But, though pornography is seldom of much importance, it may be of considerable interest, for to talk about it is unavoidably to talk about the Great Powers adjacent to it. Pornography speaks the language of Art; in recent centuries it has come within the sphere of influence of the Law; Psychology and Morals have vested interests in it. Moreover, occasionally pornography becomes genuinely important—when it is used as a seat of operations by the erotic nihilists who would like to destroy every sort of social and moral law and who devote their effective energies to subverting society as such. One who undertakes to discuss pornography finds himself, willy-nilly, falling back upon some of his ultimate positions in matters aesthetic, social, psychological, ethical. If a reader agrees with these opinions, he is likely to view them as principles; if he disagrees, prejudices. Here are some of mine.

Before plunging ahead, I had better indicate two mutually antagonistic dispositions, one liberal, the other conservative, in my opinions on pornography. On the other hand, I favor the liberal view that the less power the state and the police have over us private citizens the better, that the less the state concerns itself with the individual's thoughts, entertainments, and sexual actions the better, and that we should do what we can to keep from drifting toward totalitarianism. In other words, let us have no censorship because it strengthens the state, which is already too strong. Also let us have none because most

of the things that in fact get censored are less harmful than some of the things that do not—for example, large-circulation newspapers and magazines. Society is harmed far less by the free circulation of a book like *Fanny Hill* than it is by routine and accepted practices of the daily sensationalist press: let a man inherit ten million dollars, pour acid on his wife, or win a Nobel Prize, and reporter and photographer are made to intrude upon him and his family and then to exhibit to public view in as gross a manner as possible his follies, shames, or just plain private affairs. Such invasions of privacy are not only allowed, they are allowed for the purpose of letting the public enjoy these same invasions vicariously, all in the name of freedom of the press. I believe that this accepted practice has done more damage to society as a whole and to its citizens individually than massive doses of the most depraved pornography could ever do. So much for my liberal views.

On the other hand, I favor the conservative view that pornography exists among us and is a social evil, though a small one. That is, in a good society of any sort I can imagine—not some daydream utopia where man is impossibly restored to sexual innocence but a society populated with recognizable, imperfectible men—in a good society there would be active opposition to pornography, which is to say, considerable firmness in the drawing of lines beyond which actions, words, and images are regarded as indecent. Furthermore, the opinion that pornography should not be restrained I regard as being commonly a symptom of doctrinaire liberalism and occasionally an evidence of destructive nihilism.

A liberal suspicion of censorship and a conservative dislike of pornography are not very compatible. Some sort of compromise is necessary if they are to live together. Their marriage will never be without tensions, but maybe the quarrel between them can be patched up well enough for practical purposes.

Originally the word pornography meant a sort of low erotic art, the writing of and about whores with the intention of arousing a man's lust so that he would go to a whore, but some centuries ago, the word, like the practice itself, came to include considerably more than aesthetic pandering. It has come to overlap with obscenity, which originally meant nothing more than the filthy. Obscenity still means that primarily, but notions about what is filthy have changed. Defecating and urinating, instead of being just low and uninteresting, came to be viewed as filthy, obscene, taboo. Apparently, down in the underworld of taboo, things and functions easily become tinged with sexuality, especially functions as near the genitals as urinating and defecating. In any case, since in common practice no clear distinction is made between pornography and obscenity, I am offering, for the sake of convenience, a definition in which the single word pornog-

raphy is stretched to include most of obscenity. The definition is mine, but not just mine; it also reflects the usages and attitudes of my society.

*Pornography is the representation of directly or indirectly erotic acts with an intrusive vividness which offends decency without aesthetic justification.*

Obviously this definition does not just describe but also judges; quite as obviously it contains terms that need pinning down—decency, for example. But pornography is not at all a matter for scientific treatment. Like various other areas of sexual behavior in which society takes an unsteady, wary interest—homosexuality, for example, or fornication or nudity—pornography is relative, an ambiguous matter of personal taste and the consensus of opinion. The grounds for this definition are psychological, aesthetic, and political.

### THE CRITERION OF DISTANCE

Psychologically, pornography is not offensive because it excites sexual desire; desire as such is a fine thing, and there are happy times and places when desire should be excited and gratified freely and fully; moreover, even in inappropriate times and places there is plenty of free-floating desire abroad in the world; it doesn't take pornography to excite excesses of desire among young men and women. Nor is pornography offensive because, in its perverted and scatological versions, it excites disgust; in the proper context disgust serves the useful function of turning us from the harmful. Psychologically, the trouble with pornography is that, in our culture at least, it offends the sense of separateness, of individuality, of privacy; it intrudes upon the rights of others. We have a certain sense of specialness about those voluntary bodily functions each must perform for himself—bathing, eating, defecating, urinating, copulating, performing the sexual perversions from heavy petting to necrophilia. Take eating, for example. There are few strong taboos around the act of eating; yet most people feel uneasy about being the only one at table who is, or who is not, eating, and there is an absolute difference between eating a rare steak washed down by plenty of red wine and watching a close-up movie of someone doing so. One wishes to draw back when one is actually or imaginatively too close to the mouth of a man enjoying his dinner; in exactly the same way one wishes to remove oneself from the presence of a man and woman enjoying sexual intercourse. Not to withdraw is to peep, to pervert looking so that it becomes a sexual end in itself. As for a close-up of a private act which is also revolting, a man's vomiting, say, the avoidance-principle is the same as for a close-up of steak-eating, except that the additional unpleasantness makes one wish to keep an even greater distance.

Pornography also raises aesthetic questions, since it exists only in art—in painting, literature, sculpture, photography, theater—and my definition implies that it is offensive aesthetically. The central aesthetic issue is not whether certain subjects and words should be taboo but what distance should be maintained between spectator and subject. Because of our desire to withdraw from a man performing private acts and our doubly strong desire to withdraw from a man performing acts which are not only private but also disagreeable or perverted, we wish aesthetically to remain at a certain distance from such acts when they are represented in art. Nothing whatever in human experience should, as such, be excluded from consideration in a work of art: not Judas betraying Christ nor naked starved Jews crowded by Nazi soldiers into a gas chamber nor a child locked by his parents in a dark closet for months till he goes mad nor a man paying a whore to lash him with barbed wire for his sexual relief nor even husband and wife making love.

*Nothing human is alien to art. The question is only, how close?* But the criterion of distance is an extremely tricky one. Aesthetically, one good way to keep a spectator at a distance from the experience represented by an image is to make the image artificial, stylized, not like us. If it is sufficiently stylized, it may be vivid and detailed and still keep a proper distance from the viewer. One would normally feel uneasy at being with a lot of men, women, and children engaged in every imaginable form of pleasurable erotic activity. Yet the vivid throngs of erotic statues on certain Indian temples create in the viewer no uneasiness but are simply delightful to look at. The viewer is kept at a considerable remove by the impossible poses and expressions of the statues, he cannot identify with the persons performing the acts. For the statues do not represent lustful, passionate, guilty, self-conscious, confused people like you and me, but pure beings to whom all things are pure, paradisaal folk who are expressing their joy in generation and the body by erotic acts: these are stylized artifices of blessedness. Another way of keeping the spectator at a proper distance from a private experience is to give very little of it—make the image small, sketch it in with few details. One does not want to be close to a man while he is defecating nor to have a close-up picture of him in that natural, innocent act—not at all because defecating is reprehensible, only because it is displeasing to intrude upon. One would much rather have a detailed picture of a thief stealing the last loaf of bread from a starving widow with three children than one of Albert Schweitzer at stool. However, Brueghel's painting "The Netherlandish Proverbs" represents two bare rear ends sticking out of a window, presumably of people defecating into the river below, and one quite enjoys the sight—because it is a small part of a large and



pleasant picture of the world and because the two figures are tiny, sketched in, far away.

To be sure, a satiric work of art may purposely arouse disgust in its audience. Even the breast of a healthy woman is revolting when inspected too closely, as Swift knew when he had tiny Gulliver revolted by every blemish on the breast of the Brobdingnagian wet nurse suckling the baby. Our revulsion at the description of her breast sticking out a good six feet, with a nipple half the size of a man's head, is necessary to Swift's satiric purposes, and it is kept within bounds by his reminding us that if proportions had been normal—if Gulliver and she had been about the same size—both he and we would have been pleased by the sight of her breast. When the artist's purpose goes to the limit of satire and he intends, as Swift does in the fourth book of *Gulliver's Travels*, to disgust us with man as such, then he will force us right into the unpleasantly private, as Swift gets us to contemplate the Yahoos copulating promiscuously and lovelessly, besmeared with their own excrement. The aesthetic danger of such powerful evocations of disgust is that the audience may and often does turn not only against the object of the artist's hatred but also against the artist and work of art for having aroused such unpleasant emotions. Swift, just because he succeeds so powerfully, is often reviled for his misanthropy in the voyage to the Houyhnhnms; the fourth book of *Gulliver's Travels* is even called a product and proof of madness—which is convenient and safe, for of course the fantasies of a madman may be pathetic and scary but they don't apply to us, *we* are sane.

### THE EROTIC USED—AND MISUSED

There is a special problem raised by realism, because it aims to present people as they actually are. How can a realistic artist be true to his subject if he is forbidden direct access to an area of human behavior which is of considerable importance? The aesthetic problem is for the realistic artist to represent these actions in such a way as to lead to understanding of the characters without arousing disgust against them or a prurient interest in their activities. When he can accomplish this very difficult feat, then he is justified in including in a realistic work of art representations that would otherwise be pornographic. Here are two instances of intimate erotic acts realistically represented, one of a kiss which is pornographic, the other of a copulation which is aesthetically justified and hence is not pornographic.

In the movie *Baby Doll*, made by Elia Kazan, a healthy young man and woman who desire one another embrace. By this point

in the movie the spectator is convinced that their lust is powerful but banal, and a brief and somewhat distant shot of their embracing would adequately suggest to him how intensely they wanted to consummate their desire. Instead, he is subject to a prolonged series of images, especially auditory images, the effect of which is to arouse his own lust and/or disgust, to no aesthetic end. The kiss becomes so severed from characters and plot that the spectator does not care how the couple are related, but cares only that they are given over to desire, and he is encouraged by the very depersonalization of that desire to give himself over to a lust of his own. He may be excited to want some sort of sexual activity with the next available person, but, more probably, observing and sharing in that movie embrace becomes a kind of substitute sexual activity on the part of the spectator. For, just because the scene in *Baby Doll* arouses its spectator vicariously and in a theater, the chief appetite it whets is not for casual fornication but for more voyeurism—which is good at least for the movie business. Even if *Baby Doll* were a good work of art, as it surely is not, this episode in itself would remain aesthetically unjustified and therefore pornographic, and would merit censoring.

The other example of an intimately presented erotic act is from the novel *Pretty Leslie* by R. V. Cassill. The reader is given an emotionally intense account of a young man and woman copulating in an abnormal way; the man hurts the woman, and the reader understands how he does it and why she lets him do it. This would seem to be essentially pornographic, yet it is not. The art of this novel redeems its ugliness. The reader is not encouraged to use this episode as an incitement to casual fornication or voyeurism. Instead, what is aroused in him is a profound understanding of the characters themselves, of a kind he could have got in no other way. To understand what these people were like, how they were connected, and why they did what they did to each other, the reader must be close to them as they make love, and because he knows this is necessary for his understanding, he will not use either the episode or the whole novel for pornographic ends, unless he himself is already perverted. In *Baby Doll* a natural private act, by being brought close for no legitimate reason, excites an uneasy desire whose satisfaction can only be indiscriminate or perverse. In *Pretty Leslie* the account of an unnatural private act is not so close as to create disgust but is close enough to lead toward moral understanding and aesthetic satisfaction: there is no other possible way for the novelist to accomplish this legitimate end, and the emphasis he gives the episode is in proportion to its contribution to the whole novel.

The aesthetic problem has been stated succinctly by Jean Genet. As a professed immoralist and enemy of society, he has no compunction about using pornography and in fact he once made a porno-

graphic movie. But as a writer, he has this to say about his art (in an interview in *Playboy* magazine for April 1964) "I now think that if my books arouse readers sexually, they're badly written, because the poetic emotion should be so strong that no reader is moved sexually. In so far as my books are pornographic, I don't reject them. I simply say that I lacked grace."

Nothing said thus far would justify legal suppression, official censorship. The effect of pornography in a work of art is aesthetically bad, but it is no business of the state to suppress bad art. The effect of pornography on an individual psyche is that of an assault, ranging in severity from the equivalent of a mere pinch to that of an open cut; but in the normal course of things one can avoid such assaults without much trouble, and, besides, the wounds they make are seldom very severe one by one, though they may be cumulatively. To be sure, there are people who want and need pornography just as there are those who want and need heroin, but such a secret indulgence is not in itself socially dangerous. Here again, the state has no business intruding: a man's soul is his own to pollute if he wishes, and it is not for the state to say, "Be thou clean, be thou healthy, close the bathroom door behind you." It is only when pornography becomes public that, like dope, it takes on a sufficiently political cast for censorship even to be considered. It is unlike dope in that it sometimes acquires political overtones by being used ideologically, when put in the service of nihilism. But in one important respect it is like dope: it usually becomes public by being offered for sale, especially to the young.

### SELL IT UNDER THE COUNTER

The classic example of pornography is a filthy picture: it is ugly; it is sold and displayed surreptitiously, it allows the viewer to intrude vicariously upon the privacy of others, it shows two or more men and women posing for money in front of a camera, in attitudes which sexual desire alone would lead them to assume in private, if at all. An adult looking at such a picture is roused to an excitement which may lead either to revulsion or to satisfaction, but whatever his reaction, he should be left alone to decide for himself whether he wants to repeat the experience. The state has no legitimate political concern with his private vices. But the effect on young people of such a picture, and especially of a steady diet of such pictures, is another matter. A common argument against allowing young people to have unrestricted access to pornography runs somewhat as follows:

About sex the young are curious and uncertain and have very powerful feelings. A filthy picture associates sexual acts with ugly, vicarious, and surreptitious pleasure, and helps to cut sex off from love

and free joy. At the most, one experience of pornography may have a salutary effect on the curious, uncertain mind of an adolescent. To be shown what has been forbidden might provide him a considerable relief, and if he has feared that he is warped because of his fantasies, he can see how really warped are those who act on such fantasies. Moreover, by his own experience he can learn why pornography is forbidden: experience of it is at once fascinating, displeasing, and an end in itself, that is to say, perverse. However, too many experiences with pornography may encourage the young to turn their fantasies into actions ("in dreams begin responsibilities") or to substitute fantasies for actions, and so may confirm them in bad habits.

Whatever the validity of this argument, it or something like it is the rationale by which our society justifies its strong taboo against exposing children to pornography. For my own part, I would accept the argument as mostly valid. The state has no business legislating virtue, indeed, one of the symptoms of totalitarianism is the persistent attempt of the state not just to punish its citizens for wrongdoing, but to change their nature, to make them what its rulers conceive to be good. But patently the state has the obligation to protect the young against the public acts of the vicious.

This means that, in the matter of the sale and display of pornography, the state, the apparatus of the law, should have two effective policies. It should strictly forbid making pornography accessible to the young: "No One Under 18 Admitted." But as for pornography for adults, the law should rest content with a decent hypocrisy: "Keep it out of the marketplace, sell it under the counter, and the law won't bother you."

An assumption underlying such policies is that a certain amount of official hypocrisy is one of the operative principles of a good society. It is hard to imagine a civilized society which would not disapprove of adultery, for the maintenance of the family as an institution is one of the prime concerns of society, and adultery threatens the family. Yet, on the other hand, imagine living in a country in which the laws against adultery were strictly enforced—the informing, spying, breaking in upon, denouncing, the regiment of self-righteous teetotalers. What is obviously needed here is what we have: unenforced laws. Only an all-or-none zealot fails to distinguish between the deplorable hypocrisy of a man deceiving his neighbors for his own gain and the salutary hypocrisy of a government recognizing the limits beyond which it should not encroach upon its individual citizens. Another assumption underlying these recommendations is that the censorship of simple pornography for adults will never be very effective. There is a steady demand for it, and it is not important enough to prosecute at much expense. The main function of laws against adult pornography is to express disapproval of it.

Clearly the logic of this argument leads to prohibiting certain books and works of art that are now legally available in some parts of the country. For example, in some localities the courts have refused to prohibit the sale of *Fanny Hill*. This refusal seems to me quite irresponsible on any grounds other than a general refusal to censor pornography, for by any meaningful definition *Fanny Hill* is pornographic. Such story as there is in the novel exists for no other purpose than to provide occasions for detailed accounts of sexual encounters, and these accounts are the only passages in the book with power to stir the reader's emotions. The characters are very simple types without intrinsic interest, and Fanny herself is little more than a man's fantasy of female complaisance and sexual competence. The one literary quality which has made the book celebrated is a certain elegance of style, compared to most simple pornography it reads like a masterpiece, but to anyone familiar with eighteenth-century English prose it reads like several other third-rate novels. Surely the world is not in such need of third-rate eighteenth-century English fictional prose as to allow this consideration alone to justify the public sale of a work of sheer pornography. What else would justify its sale is hard to imagine. To deny that the book is pornographic or to say that its literary value redeems its pornography, is to blur distinctions, and for an august court of law to do so is for the state to abrogate one of its functions. An essential and conservative function of the state is to say "Thou shalt not," to formulate society's taboos. Unless I am seriously mistaken, in this instance the court, speaking for the state, has refused to draw a clear line which corresponds to society's actual customs. In our culture the place for nudists is in a nudist colony, not on the city streets, and the way to sell books like *Fanny Hill* is under the counter, not over it. In the name of enlightenment and sexual permissiveness, the state is violating an actual taboo, and the reaction to many such violations may very well be a resurgence of that savage fanaticism which burns books and closes theaters.

### WHAT TO CENSOR, AND WHY

I am going to defer a consideration of the nihilistic use of pornography, which would logically come next, and instead look at certain borderline questions of enforcing censorship. The censoring of unquestionable pornography is of little interest, it pretty directly reflects what decent society considers indecent at a given time; it is custom in action. But the censorship of borderline pornography demands discrimination and philosophy, without which censorship can degenerate into puritanical repressiveness of the kind there has been quite enough of during the past two or three centuries.

Thus far, my argument on what to censor and why has led to a legal position which is at least within hailing distance of common practice in the United States now. To purveyors of raw pornography our practice says in effect: bother your neighbors, especially children, and you will be punished; leave others untroubled by your vice and you will be viewed with disapproval by the law but left alone. This attitude is fine till one gets down to cases, but once it is a matter of wording and enforcing a law, the question must be answered: how is one to distinguish between pornographic and decent art? Still, such lines must be drawn if there are to be laws at all, and they must, in the nature of things, be arbitrary. As I see it, a more manageable form of the question is this: who should do the censoring? Whatever the answer to this question may be, whatever the best method of censoring, one thing is clear—our present method is unsatisfactory.

As things stand, an object is banned as pornographic on the judgment of some official in customs or the postal service or else by some police officer prodded by a local zealot. In most cases this judgment presents little difficulty: even civil-liberty extremists who are opposed to all censorship on principle blanch when they are confronted with genuine hard-core pornography, the unarguably warped stuff, the bulk of the trade. But sometimes there is a question of assessing the value of a work of art, and for this task the bureaucrats and policemen who are presently empowered to decide are unqualified.

Should *Fanny Hill* be offered to the public freely? When society has said *no* for generations and when judges and literary critics cannot agree on the question, it is wrong to allow a police sergeant to decide the matter. If a duly constituted public authority says, "*Fanny Hill* shall not be sold in this state," then the policeman's duty is clear: arrest the man who displays it for sale. But to leave to bureaucrats and policemen the task of making all the delicate discriminations necessary in deciding whether the novel should be censored in the first place, is genuinely irresponsible of society at large and of legislators in particular. To be sure, cases are brought to court. But the laws offer such vague guidance that far too much depends on the quirks of the judge or jury at hand. *No censorship might be preferable to what we have now.*

In fact, a strong case can be made for removing all censorship of pornography. Here are six arguments for abolishing censorship. The first three seem to me valid. (1) No law can be framed so as to provide a clear and sure guide to bureaucrat, policeman, judge, and jury. (2) It is very hard to demonstrate that pornography does in fact injure many people severely, even adolescents, for if the desire to break taboos is satisfied imaginatively, it is less likely to issue in antisocial acts. (3) The less power the state and the police have the better.

There are three further arguments against censorship which are

commonly used but which I find less persuasive. (1) Decent citizens can by their very disapproval segregate pornography without assistance from the state. But, in an age as troubled as ours and with so much private indiscipline and theoretical permissiveness in sexual matters, there is little reason to suppose that the moral disapproval of decent citizens would actually stop the public distribution of pornography. (2) It is arguable that some people are rendered socially less dangerous by having their sexual tensions more or less satisfied by pornography, tensions which unrelieved might well lead to much more antisocial acts. True, but pornography, if it is to help those who need and use it, must be outside the law, clearly labeled *shameful*; if society has any respect for them, it will sternly assure them that what they are doing is nasty by passing a law against it, and then will pretty much leave them alone. (3) In the past, censorship has not succeeded in keeping books of literary value from being read but has only attached an unfortunate prurience to the reading of them. But the prurience attached to reading pornography derives less from breaking a law than from violating the taboo which caused the law to come into existence.

### GOODMAN'S LOVELY DAYDREAMS

There is another argument, more important and erroneous than any of these six, which is commonly advanced in favor of abolishing censorship. It hinges on a mistaken liberal doctrine about the nature of sexual taboos. According to this doctrine, sexual taboos, like fashions in dress, are determined by local custom and have as little to do with morality as the kinds of clothes we wear. However—the argument goes—people frequently mistake these sexual taboos for ethical rules, and pass and enforce laws punishing those who violate the taboos. The result is a reduction of pleasure in sex and an increase of guilt, with an attendant host of psychological and social ills. The obvious solution is to abolish the taboos and so liberate the human spirit from its chief source of oppression and guilt. At the moment in America, this ultimately Rousseauistic doctrine finds extensive elaboration in the writings of Paul Goodman, and is present to some degree in the writings of many other intellectuals.

It presents a considerable difficulty: by supposing that the potent and obscure emotions surrounding sexual matters derive from unenlightened customs, it holds out the hope that enlightened views can liberate us from those customs so that sex in every form can become healthy and fun for all. This is a cheery, optimistic view, not unlike the sweet hopefulness of the old-fashioned anarchists who thought that all we have to do, in order to attain happiness, is to get rid of govern-

ments so we may all express our essentially good nature unrestrained. Such ideas would show to advantage in a museum of charming notions, along with phlogiston and the quarrel about how many angels can dance on the head of a pin, but turned loose in the world they sometimes cause a bit of trouble. Sexual anarchism, like political anarchism before it, is a lovely daydream. But it has come to be a part of fundamental liberalism, and so a part of the body of doctrines accepted by more and more of the rulers of the nation. Conceivably the First Amendment will be taken literally ("Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech or of the press") and many or all legal restraints against pornography may in fact be removed. But I believe that so far from eliminating sexual taboos, such an official undermining of them would only arouse the puritans to strengthen the bulwarks; the taboos would be made more repressive than ever, and many of the goods of liberalism would be wiped out along with and partly because of this utopian folly. Decent people had better learn now to censor moderately, or the licentiousness released by liberal zealots may arouse their brothers the puritan zealots to censorship by fire.

*A civilized method of censoring is feasible.* One does not have to imagine a utopian system of extirpating pornography through some sexual revolution—an Eden of erotic innocence in which prohibitions will be unnecessary because social relations will be as they should be. In our actual, historical United States, in which perversions and pornography flourish, one can imagine a better method of restraining pornography, which is yet within the framework of our customs and procedures. It would operate somewhat as follows

All decisions about what is legally pornographic in any of the arts are in the custody of boards of censors. A board is elected or appointed from each of three general categories of citizens: for example, a judge or lawyer of good repute; a professor of art, literature, or one of the humanities; and a social worker, psychologist, or clergyman. These are not exciting categories; but in them, if anywhere, are likely to be found citizens whose own opinions will reflect decent social opinion and who are also capable of making the various discriminations the task calls for. Obviously it is necessary to keep sexual anarchists off the board; just as a person is disqualified from serving as a juror in a murder case if he is against capital punishment, so one would be disqualified from serving on a board of censors if he were against censoring pornography.

A board of censors must never look to a set of rules of thumb for guidance—not, as now, to the quantity of an actress's body that must be covered. Is a burlesque dancer's breast indecent from the nipple down or is it only the nipple itself that offends? That way foolishness lies. Rather, the censors must look only to their own per-



sonal experience with a given work of art for only in such experience can art be judged. For this reason, the censors should be people for whom society's taboos are part of themselves, not something in a code external to them. No photograph, drawing, book, stage show, or moving picture is banned by the police except at the instruction of this board. Its decisions, like those of every quasi-official public agency, are subject to appeal to the courts, but the Supreme Court would do all it could to dodge such cases. *The banning is deliberately hypocritical: out of sight out of mind, so long as children are not molested.*

The aesthetic and moral principles guiding the board are roughly these: distance and effect. At the distance of a movie close-up, a kiss between husband and wife can be pornographic. If a child and adult are sitting side by side watching a stage performance of a witty Restoration comedy of adultery, they are at altogether different distances from the play, the adult closer than the child; but at a marionette performance of a fairytale melodrama they reverse distances, the child closer this time and the adult farther away. As for effect on the spectator, this consideration is only slightly less tricky than distance. The question to be asked is whether a story intrudes on the privacy of its characters in order to give the reader vicarious and perverse sexual excitement or in order to provide him with a sympathetic understanding which he could have got in no other way. These criteria of distance and effect—these rubber yardsticks—apply to the parts as well as to the whole, so that a novel or a movie of some aesthetic merit may be judged as censorable in part. In a movie the part is excisable with more or less aesthetic harm to the movie as a whole; with a book, if the board decides the gravity of the offense outweighs such literary excellence as the whole book may possess, the book is banned—not burned, just no longer offered for public sale.

This system is scarcely watertight; it presents plenty of opportunity for contradictions and revisions, it has tensions built into it. But it would not be likely to become troublesome politically; for, without strengthening the state, it provides a better way than the present one for our society to enforce certain inevitable taboos. Civilization behaves as though men were decent, in full knowledge that they are not.

### A WEAPON OF NIHILISM

The last aspect of the subject I am going to deal with is the use of pornography as a weapon of nihilistic destruction, especially by two important writers currently using it in this manner, Genet and Henry Miller. Such a writer as William Burroughs is less important because more successful; that is to say, the very thoroughness of his

solipsistic nihilism defeats his purpose, for finally his novels are not only repetitious and revolting but also pointless, so that their failure as art keeps them from being a threat to society.

In this general context, the term nihilism signifies a great deal more than it did originally. In Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*, where the word was given political currency, nihilism was quite idealistic, it held that a given society (Russia, in that case) was so corrupt or wicked that it should be destroyed, but destroyed so that a better society could emerge from its ruins. Those nineteenth-century Russian nihilists were extreme revolutionists, and quite high-minded; they did not advocate murder but political assassination, not promiscuous lust but free love. Among us now, James Baldwin is rather like those old-fashioned nihilists; he preaches destruction in the name of love. To be sure, the images of sexual love Baldwin offers are at once vacuous and indecent and the images of disgust and blame are strong. Still, compared to the thoroughgoing destructivists, he and his books are not so wild. They are tamable enough, at least, to become the fashion, for they are interpreted—against his intention, or at least against one of his intentions—as preaching little more than a local rebellion, the righting of the injustice which American Negroes have endured for so long. However, there is a nihilism which is not against this or that unjust society or social injustice but against society as such; its rage is not just political but metaphysical as well; and pornography is one of its weapons.

Genet sometimes strives to be this sort of nihilist. But in his best work, *The Balcony* especially, he is too good an artist to succeed as a total nihilist. *The Balcony* creates an imperfect but strong image of the corruptness of modern Western societies, a satiric exaggeration which the audience can recognize as the truth distorted mostly for dramatic effect. Genet the sexual pervert and social criminal sometimes wants to destroy society, though as a criminal of intelligence he knows that he needs the law his enemy; but as a dramatic artist he makes meaningful works which by their very structure oppose destruction. And the potential pornography of the works serves a dramatic end. Furthermore, he has made them to be presented in a theater, that most social of artistic forms. As a result, whatever Genet himself wants to say, a play such as *The Balcony* says to the audience, "Look how monstrously you have warped your society." So we look; and it is true, we have warped it monstrously. But this is moral art, this is not the assault of sheer nihilism. To see a performance of *The Balcony* drives one to serious contemplation of the nature of society and law. What this contemplation leads me to is the conclusion that we must improve our society and firm up our laws, for the alternatives that now appear to be open to us in the way of other social arrangements are not worth the agony and risk of attempting a revo-

lution. The play does not arouse a nihilistic zeal to destroy society, any more than it arouses sexual desire.

### THE CASE OF HENRY MILLER

Of nihilistic fiction, Henry Miller's *Tropic of Cancer* is currently the most widely read and the best spoken of. Miller is not only a fairly good writer, but the personality he projects in his book is attractive. When he stands stripped of his civilization—stripped down to his language, that is—the savage that is left is not exactly noble but he is at least honest about himself, self-indulgent, energetic, beauty-loving, and interested in the world, not a cold-hearted, torturing pervert. The one overwhelming moral virtue Miller embodies in his book is self-honesty: if you're going to be a whore, he says, be a whore all the way. This honesty is doubtless what most attracted Orwell in Miller's writing, though Orwell was a most fastidious man otherwise. Miller's prose is usually vigorous and sometimes splendid, and he is the best writer of "the character" since Sir Thomas Overbury.

Should *Tropic of Cancer* be censored or not? According to the standards for censorship advanced earlier in my argument it should not be censored for its pornography: as a work of art, it has considerable merit, and it could not achieve its ends without the use of intrinsically pornographic episodes and images. But the conflict of interests in judging this book is acute, for the purpose of Miller's novel is not just aesthetic, it is nihilistic as well. The literary value of the book is enough to redeem its pornography but not enough to make one ignore its destructive intention. *Tropic of Cancer* has no structure and is very verbose; it is, like Miller's other books, an anatomy and a segment of his imaginary autobiography, a string of images and actions. But it does have an unmistakable message: society is intrinsically vile, let us return to the natural man. In effect, this return to nature means as little work as possible and lots of loveless sex. Miller has often been mispraised, for example by Karl Shapiro, for a supposedly pagan rejoicing in sex. Miller himself is honest about his intention. Again and again he represents the sexual antics of his characters as evidence of desperation, lurking behind which is the total despair of meaninglessness. He is what he says he is: an enemy not just of the badness of our society, not just of our specific society, but of society as such. To do what he can to get his readers also to become enemies of society, he assaults with persuasive force taboos, especially sexual taboos, which are intrinsic to social order.

Yet a whole new set of justifications are needed if *Tropic of Cancer* is to be banned, justifications having to do with pornography as a destructive social act. As an act against society, to write, publish,

and distribute a book like *Tropic of Cancer* is more serious than to write, publish, and distribute a pamphlet which intellectually advocates the forcible overthrow of the government, but less serious than to take arms against the government—about on a par with inciting to rebellion, an act which a secure, free government will watch carefully and disapprove of strongly, but not forbid and punish. In other words, the only plausible argument for suppressing *Tropic of Cancer* would be that its publication is a dangerous political act and not that the book is pornographic, even though its pornography is the main instrument of the book's nihilistic force.

If you want to destroy society—not just write about a character who wants to, but if you want to make your book an instrument for destroying, a weapon—then you need pornography. For since society, at least Western society, is founded on the family as an essential social unit, nihilists and totalitarians must always attack the family as their enemy; conversely, those who attack the family as an institution are enemies of our kind of society. The totalitarians would substitute the state for the family, the nihilists would dissolve both the state and the family in the name of unrestricted gratification of natural appetite. To effect this dissolution, nihilists assault taboos, both because taboos restrain appetite and because they are an integral part of civilized order, of society as such. And since of all taboos the sexual ones are much the most important, pornography becomes for the nihilists (as it does not for the totalitarians, who need taboos) important as an instrument of dissolution; obviously a nihilistic representation of people violating taboos will be effective only if the representation itself also violates taboos. The reverse does not hold: pornography is not intrinsically nihilistic; conventional pornography recognizes and needs the rules it disobeys.

Because most pornography is not terribly harmful, and also because of the prevalence of liberal permissiveness in sexual matters, our society is falling down on one of its lesser jobs—the drawing of firm lines about what is decent. Furthermore, it has not sufficiently recognized that indecency can be and sometimes is put to politically dangerous uses. Society should oppose those who proclaim themselves its enemies and who subvert it by every means they know, not least of which is pornography. But violent repressiveness is not the best way for it to oppose them.

### OUR LOST INNOCENCE

If one is for civilization, for being civilized, for even our warped but still possible society in preference to the anarchy that threatens from one side or the totalitarianism from the other, then one must

be willing to take a middle way and to pay the price for responsibility. As things stand now, so liberal are we that a professor whose salary is paid by the state can speak out more easily in favor of *Tropic of Cancer* than against it, applauding not just its literary merits but also what he calls its celebration of sensuality and antisocial individualism. These are his honest opinions, and he, no more than the book, should be censored for advancing them. But his colleagues should not allow themselves to be cowed by his scorn of what he calls their bourgeois respectability but should rise in opposition to those opinions. In Miller's own presentation, his sensuality would guard against despair but itself becomes a way to despair; his individualism is a frenzied endeavor to compose a self in the vacuum of alienation, an alienation which he childishly blames the absolute villain, society, for imposing on him, the absolute victim; he intends his book to be an instrument for persuading its readers to abandon society, abrogate responsibility to their fellow men, and revert to a parasitic life. He claims that this sensual life is more joyous and fulfilling than any other possible in civilization; but what he describes is not a sensuality which is indeed a fulfillment for adult persons, so much as a would-be consolation for those who aspire to the condition of babies as a remedy to their grown-up woe.

To be civilized, to accept authority, to rule with over, costs deep in the soul, and not least of what it costs is likely to be some of the sensuality of the irresponsible. (In this respect the politically repressed are irresponsible, being denied responsibility. This would help account for the apparently greater sensuality among American Negroes than among American whites, for as a group Negroes have only recently been allowed to assume much social responsibility.) But we Americans, black and white, must be civilized now whether we want to be or not. Perhaps before civilization savages were noble, but, if there is anything we have learned in this vile century, it is that those who regress from civilization become ignoble beyond all toleration. They may aspire to an innocent savagery, but what they achieve is brutality.

At the end of *Tropic of Cancer*, Henry Miller says "Human beings make a strange flora and fauna. From a distance they appear negligible; close up they are apt to appear ugly and malicious" What Miller says is right enough, but he leaves out what matters most. There is a middle distance from which to look at a man, the flexible distance of decency and art, of civilized society, which defines both a man looking and a man looked at; and from this distance human beings can look pretty good, important, even beautiful sometimes, worthy of respect.

# HIGHBROW, LOWBROW, MIDDLEBROW

RUSSELL LYNES



*It becomes increasingly difficult to tell who  
is serious and who is not*

My wife's grandmother, the wife of a distinguished lawyer, once declined to dine with the Cartiers of jewelry fame because they were, as she put it, "in trade." Life for grandmother, who lived in a properly elegant but nondescript town house in New York, was relatively simple where social distinctions were concerned. While there are still a few people who think and act as she did, the passage of time has eliminated a great deal of that particular kind of snobbishness from American society. We are replacing it with another kind. The old structure of the upper class, the middle class, and the lower class is on the wane. It isn't wealth or family that makes prestige these days. It's taste and high thinking.

Edith Wharton's theory that if the taste of the rich could be improved the general level of public taste would benefit has turned out to be a fallacy. The consumers and makers of taste, it appears, cannot be divided according to the conventional social strata. Good taste and bad taste, adventurous and timid taste, cannot be explained by wealth or education, by breeding or background. Each of these plays a part, but there is no longer such a thing as upper-class taste and lower-class taste as there was once supposed to be. In recent years a new social structure has emerged in which taste and intellectual pretension and accomplishment plays a major role. What we see growing around us is a sort of social stratification in which the high-

brows are the elite, the middlebrows are the bourgeoisie, and the lowbrows are *hoi polloi*.

For the time being this is perhaps largely an urban phenomenon, and the true middlebrow may readily be mistaken in the small community for a genuine highbrow, but the pattern is emerging with increasing clarity, and the new distinctions do not seem to be based either on money or on breeding. Some lowbrows are as rich as Billy Rose, and as flamboyant, some as poor as Rosie O'Grady and as modest. Some middlebrows run industries; some run the women's auxiliary of the Second Baptist Church. Some highbrows eat caviar with their Proust; some eat hamburger when they can afford it. It is true that most highbrows are in the ill-paid professions, notably the academic, and that most middlebrows are at least reasonably well off. Only the lowbrows can be found in about equal percentages at all financial levels. There may be a time, of course, when the highbrows will be paid in accordance with their own estimate of their worth, but that is not likely to happen in any form of society in which creature comforts are in greater demand than intellectual uplift. Like poets they will have to be content mostly with prestige. The middlebrows are influential today, but neither the highbrows nor the lowbrows like them; and if we ever have intellectual totalitarianism, it may well be the lowbrows and the highbrows who will run things, and the middlebrows who will be exiled in boxcars to a collecting point probably in the vicinity of Independence, Missouri.

While this social shift, which is also a shift in the weight that we give to taste, is still in its early stages, and the dividing lines are still indistinct and the species not yet (if ever) frozen, let us examine the principal categories, with their subdivisions and splinter groups, and see where we ourselves are likely to fetch up.

The highbrows come first. Edgar Wallace, who was certainly not a highbrow himself, was asked by a newspaper reporter in Hollywood some years ago to define one. "What is a highbrow?" he said. "A highbrow is a man who has found something more interesting than women."

Presumably at some time in every man's life there are things he finds more interesting than women; alcohol, for example, or the World Series. Mr. Wallace has only partially defined the highbrow. Brander Matthews came closer when he said that "a highbrow is a person educated beyond his intelligence," and A. P. Herbert came closest of all when he wrote that "a highbrow is the kind of person who looks at a sausage and thinks of Picasso."

It is this association of culture with every aspect of daily life, from the design of his razor to the shape of the bottle that holds his sleeping pills, that distinguishes the highbrow from the middlebrow

or the lowbrow. Spiritually and intellectually the highbrow inhabits a precinct well up the slopes of Parnassus, and his view of the cultural scene is from above. His vision pinpoints certain lakes and quarries upon which his special affections are concentrated—a perturbed lake called Rilke or a deserted quarry called Kierkegaard or a meadow of exotic flowers called Henry James—but he believes that he sees them, as he sees the functional design of his razor, always in relation to the broader cultural scene. There is a certain air of omniscience about the highbrow, though that air is in many cases the thin variety encountered on the tops of high mountains from which the view is extensive but the details are lost.

You cannot tell a man that he is a lowbrow any more than you can tell a woman that her clothes are in bad taste, but a highbrow does not mind being called a highbrow. He has worked hard, read widely, traveled far, and listened attentively in order to satisfy his curiosity and establish his squatters' rights in this little corner of intellectualism, and he does not care who knows it. And this is true of both kinds of highbrow—the militant, or crusader, type and the passive, or dilettante, type. These types in general live happily together, the militant highbrow carries the torch of culture, the passive highbrows reads by its light.

The carrier of the torch makes a profession of being a highbrow and lives by his calling. He is most frequently found in university and college towns, a member of the liberal-arts faculty, teaching languages (ancient or modern), the fine arts, or literature. His spare time is often devoted to editing a magazine which is read mainly by other highbrows, ambitious undergraduates, and the editors of middlebrow publications in search of talent. When he writes for the magazine himself (or for another "little" magazine) it is usually criticism or criticism of criticism. He leaves the writing of fiction and poetry to others more bent on creation than on what has been created, for the highbrow is primarily a critic and not an artist—a taster, not a cook. He is often more interested in where the arts have been, and where they are going, than in the objects themselves. He is devoted to the proposition that the arts must be pigeonholed, and that their trends should be plotted, or as W. H. Auden puts it—

*Our intellectual marines,  
Landing in Little Magazines,  
Capture a trend*

This gravitation of the highbrows to the universities is fairly recent. In the twenties, when the little magazines were devoted to publishing experimental writing rather than criticism of exhumed experimental writing, the highbrows flocked to Paris, New York, and



Chicago. The *transatlantic review*, *transition*, and the *Little Review*, of the lower-case era of literature, were all published in Paris; *BROOM* was published in New York, *Poetry* was (and still is) published in Chicago. The principal little magazines now, with the exception of *Partisan Review*, a New York product but written mostly by academics, are published in the colleges—the *Kenyon Review*, the *Sewanee Review*, the *Virginia Quarterly*, and so on—and their flavor reflects this. But this does not mean that highbrows do not prefer the centers in which cultural activities are the most varied and active, and these are still London, Paris, New York, and more recently Rome. Especially in the fine arts, the highbrow has a chance to make a living in the metropolis where museums are centered and where art is bought and sold as well as created. This is also true of commercial publishing, in which many highbrows find suitable, if not entirely congenial, refuge.

But no matter where they may make their homes, all highbrows live in a world which they believe is inhabited almost entirely by Philistines—those who through viciousness or smugness or the worship of materialism gnaw away at the foundations of culture. And the highbrow sees as his real enemy the middlebrow, whom he regards as a pretentious and frivolous man or woman who uses culture to satisfy social or business ambitions, who, to quote Clement Greenberg in *Partisan Review*, is busy “devaluating the precious, infecting the healthy, corrupting the honest, and stultifying the wise.”

It takes a man who feels strongly to use such harsh words, but the militant highbrow has no patience with his enemies. He is a serious man who will not tolerate frivolity where the arts are concerned. It is part of his function as a highbrow to protect the arts from the culture mongers, and he spits venom at those he suspects of selling the Muses short.

The fact that nowadays everyone has access to culture through schools and colleges, through the press, radio, and museums, disturbs him deeply, for it tends to blur the distinctions between those who are serious and those who are frivolous. “Culturally what we have,” wrote William Phillips in *Horizon* several years ago, “is a democratic free-for-all in which every individual, being as good as every other one, has the right to question any form of intellectual authority.” To this Mr. Greenberg adds, “It becomes increasingly difficult to tell who is serious and who is not.”

The highbrow does not like to be confused, nor does he like to have his authority questioned, except by other highbrows of whose seriousness he is certain. The result is precisely what you would expect. The highbrows believe in, and would establish, an intellectual elite, “a fluid body of intellectuals . . . whose accepted role in society is to perpetuate traditional ideas and values and to create new ones.”

Such an elite would like to see the middlebrow eliminated, for it regards him as the undesirable element in our, and anybody else's, culture.

"It must be obvious to anyone that the volume and social weight of middlebrow culture," Mr. Greenberg writes, "borne along as it has been by the great recent increase in the American middle class, have multiplied at least tenfold in the past three decades. This culture presents a more serious threat to the genuine article than the old-time pulp dime novel, Tin Pan Alley, *Schund* variety ever has or will. Unlike the latter, which has its social limits clearly marked out for it, middlebrow culture attacks distinctions as such and insinuates itself everywhere. . . . Insidiousness is of its essence, and in recent years its avenues of penetration have become infinitely more difficult to detect and block."

By no means all highbrows take such a strong position as this or are so concerned with the tastes of others. Many of them, the passive ones, are merely consumers totally indifferent to the middlebrows or supercilious about them. Some without a great deal of hope but in ardent good faith expend themselves in endeavor to widen the circle of those who can enjoy the arts in their purest forms. Many museums, colleges, and publishing houses are at least partly staffed by highbrows who exert a more than half-hearted effort to make the arts exciting and important to the public. But they are aware that most of their labors are wasted. In his heart of hearts nearly every highbrow believes with Ortega y Gasset that "the average citizen [is] a creature incapable of receiving the sacrament of art, blind and deaf to pure beauty." When, for example, the Metropolitan Museum planned to expand its facilities a few years ago, an art dealer who can clearly be classified as a highbrow remarked: "All this means is less art for more people."

There are also many highbrows who are not concerned in the least with the arts or with literature, and who do not fret themselves about the upstart state of middlebrow culture. These are the specialized highbrows who toil in the remote corners of science and history, of philology and mathematics. They are concerned with their investigations of fruit flies or Elizabethan taxation or whatever it may be, and they do not talk about them, as the dilettante always talks of the arts, to the first person they can latch onto at a cocktail party. When not in their laboratories or the library, they are often as not thoroughly middlebrow in their attitudes and tastes.

The real highbrow's way of life is as intellectualized as his way of thinking, and as carefully plotted. He is likely to be either extremely self-conscious about his physical surroundings and creature comforts or else sublimely, and rather ostentatiously, indifferent to them. If he affects the former attitude, he will within the limits of his income surround himself with works of art. If he cannot afford paint-

ings he buys drawings. Color reproductions, except as casual reminders tucked in the frame of a mirror or thrown down on a table, are beneath him. The facsimile is no substitute in his mind for the genuine, and he would rather have a slight sketch by a master, Braque or Picasso or even Jackson Pollock, than a fully-realized canvas by an artist he considers not quite first-rate. Drawings by his friends he hangs in the bathroom. His furniture, if it is modern, consists of identifiable pieces by Aalto, or Breuer, or Mies van der Rohe, or Eames, it does not come from department stores. If he finds modern unsympathetic, he will tend to use Biedermeier or the more "entertaining" varieties of Victorian, which he collects piece by piece with an eye to the slightly eccentric. If he has antiques, you may be sure they are not maple; the cult of Early American is offensive to him.

The food that he serves will be planned with the greatest care, either very simple (a perfect French omelette made with sweet butter) or elaborate recipes from *Wine and Food* magazine published in London and edited by André Simon. If he cannot afford a pound of butter with every guinea fowl, he will in all probability resort to the casserole, and peasant cookery with the sparer parts of animals and birds seasoned meticulously with herbs that he gets from a little importer in the wholesale district. His wine is more likely to be a "perfectly adequate little red wine" for eighty-nine cents a half gallon than an imported French vintage. (Anybody with good advice can buy French wines, but the discovery of a good domestic bottle shows perception and educated taste.) He wouldn't dream of washing his salad bowl. His collection of phonograph records is likely to bulk large at the ends and sag in the middle—a predominance of Bach-and-before at one end and Stravinsky, Schonberg, Bartok, and New Orleans jazz at the other. The nineteenth century is represented, perhaps, by Beethoven quartets and late sonatas, and some French "art songs" recorded by Maggie Teyte. His radio, if he has one, is turned on rarely, he wouldn't have a television set in the house.

The highbrow who disregards his creature comforts does it with a will. He lives with whatever furniture happens to come his way in a disorganized conglomeration of Victorian, department store, and Mexican bits and pieces. He takes care of his books in that he knows where each one is no matter in what disorder they may appear. Every other detail of domestic life he leaves to his wife, of whose taste he is largely unaware, and he eats what she gives him without comment. If he is a bachelor, he eats in a cafeteria or drugstore or diner and sometimes spills soup on the open pages of his book. He is oblivious of the man who sits down opposite him, and if Edgar Wallace is right, to the woman who shares his table. He is not a man without passions, but they have their place. Dress is a matter of indifference to him.

The hightbrows about whom I have been writing are mainly

sumers and not creators—editors, critics, and dilettantes. The creative artists who are generally considered highbrows—such men as T. S. Eliot, E. M. Forster, Picasso, and Stravinsky—seem to me to fall in another category, that of the professional man who, while he may be concerned with communicating with a limited (and perhaps largely highbrow) audience, is primarily a doer and not a done-by. When Eliot or Forster or Picasso or Stravinsky sits down at his work table, I do not know whether he says to himself, “I am going to create Art,” but I very much doubt if that is what is in his mind. He is concerned rather with the communication of ideas within the frame of a poem, a novel, a painting, or a ballet suite, and if it turns out to be art (which many think it frequently does) that is to him a by-product of creation, an extra dividend of craftsmanship, intelligence, and sensibility. But when this happens he is taken up by the highbrow consumer and made much of. In fact he may become, whether he likes it or not, a vested interest, and his reputation will be every bit as carefully guarded by the highbrows as a hundred shares of Standard Oil of New Jersey by the middlebrows. He will be sold—at a par decided upon by the highbrows—to the middlebrows, who are natural gamblers in the commodities of culture.

In a sense it is this determination of par that is the particular contribution of the highbrow. Others may quarrel with his evaluations, but the fact remains that unless there were a relatively small group of self-appointed intellectuals who took it upon themselves to ransack the studios of artists, devour the manuscripts of promising writers, and listen at the keyholes of young composers, many talented men and women might pass unnoticed and our culture be the poorer. Their noncommercial attitude toward discovery of talent is useful, though they have an obsession with the evils of the monetary temptations with which America strews the artist's path. They stand as a wavering bulwark against the enticements of Hollywood and the advertising agencies, and they are saddened by the writers and painters who have set out to be serious men, as Hemingway did, and then become popular by being taken up by the middlebrows. They even go so far as to say that a story published in *Partisan Review* is a better story than if it were published in *The New Yorker* or *Harper's Bazaar*, for the reason that “what we have is at once a general raising and lowering of the level, for which the blurring of distinctions new writing tends to become more and more serious and intellectual and less and less bold and extreme. . . .”

This attitude, which is the attitude of the purist, is valuable. It is the sort of statement that James Jackson Jarves might have made a century before, or James Fenimore Cooper even earlier. They were dismayed at the way every man pretended to be a connoisseur—“knowledge or no knowledge; brains or no brains; taste or no taste.”

The ground in which the arts grow stays fertile only when it is fought over by both artists and consumers, and the phalanx of highbrows in the field, a somewhat impenetrable square of warriors, can be counted on to keep the fray alive.

The highbrow's friend is the lowbrow. The highbrow enjoys and respects the lowbrow's art—jazz for instance—which he is likely to call a spontaneous expression of folk culture. The lowbrow is not interested, as the middlebrow is, in pre-empting any of the highbrow's function or in any way threatening to blur the lines between the serious and the frivolous. In fact he is almost completely oblivious of the highbrow unless he happens to be taken up by him—as many jazz musicians, primitive painters, and ballad writers have been—and then he is likely to be flattered, a little suspicious, and somewhat amused. A creative lowbrow like the jazz musician is a prominent citizen in his own world, and the fact that he is taken up by the highbrows has very little effect on his social standing therein. He is tolerant of the highbrow, whom he regards as somewhat odd and out-of-place in a world in which people do things and enjoy them without analyzing why or worrying about their cultural implications.

The lowbrow doesn't give a hang about art *qua* art. He knows what he likes, and he doesn't care why he likes it—which implies that all children are lowbrows. The word "beautiful," which has long since ceased to mean anything to the highbrow, is a perfectly good word to the lowbrow. Beautiful blues, beautiful sunsets, beautiful women, all things that do something to a man inside without passing through the mind, associations without allusions, illusions without implications. The arts created by the lowbrow are made in the expression of immediate pleasure or grief, like most forms of jazz; or of usefulness, like the manufacturing of a tool or a piece of machinery or even a bridge across the Hudson. The form, to use a highbrow phrase, follows the function. When the lowbrow arts follow this formula (which they don't always do), then the highbrow finds much in them to admire, and he calls it the vernacular. When, however, the lowbrow arts get mixed up with middlebrow ideas of culture, then the highbrow turns away in disgust. Look, for example, at what happened to the circus, a traditional form of lowbrow art. They got in Norman Bel Geddes to fancy it up, and now its special flavor of authenticity is gone—all wrapped up in pink middlebrow sequins. This is not to say that the lowbrow doesn't like it just as much as he ever did. It is the highbrow who is pained.

Part of the highbrow's admiration for the lowbrow stems from the lowbrow's indifference to art. This makes it possible for the highbrow to blame whatever he doesn't like about lowbrow taste on the middlebrow. If the lowbrow reads the comics, the highbrow under-

stands; he is frequently a connoisseur of the comics himself. But if he likes grade-B double features, the highbrow blames that on the corrupting influence of the middlebrow moneybags of Hollywood. If he participates in give-away quiz programs, it is because the radio pollsters have decided that the average mental age of the listening audience is thirteen, and that radio and television are venal for taking advantage of the adolescent.

The lowbrow consumer, whether he is an engineer of bridges or a bus driver, wants to be comfortable and to enjoy himself without having to worry about whether he has good taste or not. It doesn't make any difference to him that a chair is a bad Grand Rapids copy of an eighteenth-century *fauteuil* as long as he's happy when he sits down in it. He doesn't care whether the movies are art, or the television improving, so long as he has fun while he is giving them his attention and getting a fair return of pleasure from his investment. It wouldn't occur to him to tell a novelist what kind of book he should write, or a movie director what kind of a movie to make. If he doesn't like a book he ignores it; if he doesn't like a movie he says so, whether it is a Martin and Lewis show or *Henry V*. If he likes jive or square dancing, he doesn't worry about whether they are fashionable or not. If other people like the ballet, that's all right with him, so long as he doesn't have to go himself. In general the lowbrow attitude toward the arts is live and let live. Lowbrows are not Philistines. One has to know enough about the arts to argue about them with highbrows to be a Philistine.

The popular press, and also much of the unpopular press, is run by the middlebrows, and it is against them that the highbrow inveighs.

"The true battle," wrote Virginia Woolf in an essay called "Middlebrow" (she was the first, I believe, to define the species) ". . . lies not between the highbrows and the lowbrows joined together in blood brotherhood but against the bloodless and pernicious pest who comes between . . . Highbrows and lowbrows must band together to exterminate a pest which is the bane of all thinking and living."

Pushing Mrs. Woolf's definition a step further, the pests divide themselves into two groups: the upper middlebrows and the lower middlebrows. It is the upper middlebrows who are the principal purveyors of highbrow ideas and the lower middlebrows who are the principal consumers of what the upper middlebrows pass along to them.

Many publishers, for example, are upper middlebrows—as are most educators, museum directors, movie producers, art dealers, lecturers, and the editors of most magazines which combine national circulation with an adult vocabulary. These are the men and women who

devote themselves professionally to the dissemination of ideas and cultural artifacts and, not in the least incidentally, make a living along the way. They are the cultural do-gooders, and they see their mission clearly and pursue it with determination. Some of them are disappointed highbrows, some of them try to work both sides of the street, nearly all of them straddle the fence between highbrow and middlebrow and enjoy their equivocal position.

The conscientious publisher, for instance, believes in the importance of literature and the dignity of publishing as a profession. He spends a large part of his time on books that will not yield him a decent return on his investment. He searches out writers of promise; he pores over the "little" magazines (or pays other people to), he leafs through hundreds and hundreds of pages of manuscript. He advises writers, encourages them, coaxes them to do their best work; he even advances them money. But he is not able to be a publisher at all (unless he is willing to put his personal fortune at the disposal of financially naive muses) if he does not publish to make money. In order to publish slender volumes of poetry he must also publish fat volumes of historical romance, and in order to encourage the first novel of a promising young writer he must sell tens of thousands of copies of a book by an old hand who grinds out one best seller a year. He must take the measure of popular taste and cater to it at the same time that he tries to create a taste for new talent. If he is a successful publisher he makes money, lives comfortably, patronizes the other arts, serves on museum boards and committees for the Prevention of This and the Preservation of That, contributes to the symphony, and occasionally buys pictures by contemporary painters.

The highbrow suspects that the publisher does not pace his book-lined office contriving ways to serve the muses and that these same muses have to wait their turn in line until the balance sheet has been served. He believes that the publisher is really happy only when he can sell a couple of hundred thousand copies of a novel about a hussy with a horsewhip or a book on how to look forty when forty-five. To the highbrow he is a tool to be cultivated and used, but not to be trusted.

The museum director, as we have already seen, is in much the same position, caught between the muses and the masses. If he doesn't make a constant effort to swell the door count, his middlebrow trustees want to know why he isn't serving the community; if he does, the highbrows want to know why he is pandering to popular taste and not minding his own business—the service of scholarship and the support of artists currently certified to be "serious." Educators are in the same position, bound to be concerned with mass education often at the expense of the potential scholar, and editors of all magazines except those supported by private angels or cultural institutions know

that they must not only enlighten but entertain if they are to have enough readers to pay the bills. To the highbrow this can lead to nothing but compromise and mediocrity.

The upper-middlebrow consumer takes his culture seriously, as seriously as his job allows, for he is gainfully employed. In his leisure hours he reads Toynbee or Osbert Sitwell's serialized memoirs. He goes to museum openings and to the theater and he keeps up on the foreign films. He buys pictures, sometimes old masters if he can afford them, sometimes contemporary works. He has a few etchings and lithographs, and he is not above an occasional color reproduction of a Cézanne or a Lautrec. Writers and painters are his friends and dine at his house; if, however, his own son were to express an interest in being an artist, he would be dismayed ("so few artists ever really pull it off")—though he would keep a stiff upper lip and hope the boy would learn better before it was too late. His house is tastefully decorated, sometimes in the very latest mode, a model of the modern architect's dream of functionalism, in which case he can discourse on the theory of the open plan and the derivations of the International Style with the zest and uncertain vocabulary of a convert. If his house is "traditional" in character, he will not put up with Grand Rapids copies of old pieces; he will have authentic ones, and will settle for Victorian if he cannot afford Empire. He, or his wife, will ransack second-hand shops for entertaining bibelots and lamps or a piece of Brussels carpet from Andrew Jackson Downing's day for the bedroom. He never refers to curtains as "drapes." He talks about television as potentially a new art form, and he watches the Ford Foundation's TV program *Omnibus*. His library contains a few of the more respectable current best sellers which he reads out of "curiosity" rather than interest. There are a few shelves of first editions, some of them autographed by friends who have dined at his house, some of them things (like a presentation copy of *Jurgen*) that he "just happened to pick up" and a sampling of American and British poets. There is also a shelf of paper-bound French novels—most of them by nineteenth-century writers. The magazines on his table span the areas from *Time* and *The New Yorker* to *Harper's* and the *Atlantic*, with an occasional copy of the *Yale* and *Partisan Reviews*, and the *Art News*.

From this it can be seen that he supports the highbrows—buys some of the books they recommend and an occasional picture they have looked upon with favor—and contributes to organized efforts to promote the arts both by serving on boards and shelling out money. In general he is modest about expressing his opinion on cultural matters in the presence of highbrows but takes a slightly lordly tone when he is talking to other middlebrows. If he discovers a "little" painter or poet, the chances are excellent that the man has already



been discovered and promoted by a highbrow or by an upper-middle-brow entrepreneur (art dealer or publisher). Once in a while he will take a flyer on an unknown artist, and hang his picture inconspicuously in the bedroom. He takes his function as a patron of the arts seriously, but he does it for the pleasure it gives him to be part of the cultural scene. If he does it for "money, fame, power, or prestige," as Virginia Woolf says he does, these motives are so obscured by a general sense of well-being and well-meaning that he would be shocked and surprised to be accused of venality.

If the upper middlebrow is unsure of his own tastes, but firm in his belief that taste is extremely important, the lower middlebrow is his counterpart. The lower middlebrow ardently believes that he knows what he likes, and yet his taste is constantly susceptible to the pressures that put him in knickerbockers one year and rust-colored slacks the next. Actually he is unsure about almost everything, especially about what he likes. This may explain his pronouncements on taste, which he considers an effete and questionable virtue, and his resentment of the arts, but it may also explain his strength.

When America and Americans are characterized by foreigners and highbrows, the middlebrows are likely to emerge as the dominant group in our society—a dreadful mass of insensible back-slappers, given to sentimentality as a prime virtue, the willing victims of slogans and the whims of the bosses, both political and economic. The picture painted by middlebrow exploiters of the middlebrow, such as the advertisers of nationally advertised brands, is strikingly similar to that painted by the highbrow; their attitudes and motives are quite different (the highbrow paints with a snarl, the advertiser with a gleam), but they both make the middlebrow out to be much the same kind of creature. The villain of the highbrow and the hero of the advertisers is envisaged as "the typical American family"—happy little women, happy little children, all spotless or sticky in the jam pot, framed against dimity curtains in the windows or decalcomania flowers on the cupboard doors. Lower-middlebrowism is a world pictured without tragedy, a world of new two-door sedans, and Bendix washers, and reproductions of hunting prints over the living-room mantel. It is a world in which the ingenuity and patience of the housewife are equaled only by the fidelity of her husband and his love of home, pipe, and television. It is a world that smells of soap. But it is a world of ambition as well, the constant striving for a better way of life—better furniture, bigger refrigerators, more books in the bookcase, more evenings at the movies. To the advertisers this is Americanism; to the highbrows this is the dead weight around the neck of progress, the gag in the mouth of art.

The lower middlebrows are not like this, of course, and unlike

the highbrows and the upper middlebrows, whose numbers are tiny by comparison, they are hard to pin down. They live everywhere, rubbing elbows with lowbrows in apartment houses like vast beehives, in row houses all alike from the outside except for the planting, in large houses at the ends of gravel driveways, in big cities, in medium cities and suburbs, and in small towns, from Boston to San Francisco, from Seattle to Jacksonville. They are the members of the book clubs who read difficult books along with racy and innocuous ones that are sent along by Messrs. Fadiman, Canby, Beecroft *et al.* They are the course takers who swell the enrollments of adult education classes in everything from "The Technique of the Short Story" to "Child Care." They are the people who go to hear the lecturers that swarm out from New York lecture bureaus with tales of travel on the Dark Continent and panaceas for saving the world from a fate worse than capitalism. They eat in tea shoppes and hold barbecues in their back yards. They are hell-bent on improving their minds as well as their fortunes. They decorate their homes under the careful guidance of *Good Housekeeping* and the *Ladies' Home Journal*, or, if they are well off, of *House and Garden*, and are subject to fads in furniture so long as these don't depart too radically from the traditional and the safe, from the copy of Colonial and the reproduction of Sheraton. In matters of taste, the lower-middlebrow world is largely dominated by women. They select the furniture, buy the fabrics, pick out the wallpapers, the pictures, the books, the china. Except in the selection of his personal apparel and the car, it is almost *infra dig* for a man to have taste; it is not considered quite manly for the male to express opinions about things which come under the category of "artistic."

Nonetheless, as a member of the school board or the hospital board he decides which design shall be accepted when a new building goes up. The lower middlebrows are the organizers of the community fund, the members of the legislature, the park commissioners. They pay their taxes and they demand services in return. There are millions of them, conscientious stabilizers of society, slow to change, slow to panic. But they are not as predictable as either the highbrows or the bosses, political or economic, think they are. They can be led, they can be seduced, but they cannot be pushed around.

Highbrow, lowbrow, upper middlebrow, and lower middlebrow—the lines between them are sometimes indistinct, as the lines between upper class, lower class, and middle class have always been in our traditionally fluid society. But gradually they are finding their own levels and confining themselves more and more to the company of their own kind.

The highbrows would apparently like to eliminate the middlebrows and devise a society that would approximate an intellectual

feudal system in which the lowbrows do the work and create folk arts, and the highbrows do the thinking and create fine arts. All middlebrows, presumably, would have their televisions taken away, be suspended from society until they had agreed to give up their subscriptions to the Book-of-the-Month, turned their color reproductions over to a Commission for the Dissolution of Middlebrow Taste, and renounced their affiliation with all educational and other cultural institutions whatsoever. They would be taxed for the support of all writers, artists, musicians, critics, and critics-of-criticism whose production could be certified "serious"—said writers, artists, musicians, and critics to be selected by representatives of qualified magazines with circulations of not more than five thousand copies. Middlebrows, both upper and lower, who persisted in "devaluating the precious, infecting the healthy, corrupting the honest, and stultifying the wise" would be disposed of forthwith.

If life for grandmother, who wouldn't dine with the Cartiers, was simple in its social distinctions, life is becoming equally simple for us. The rungs of the ladder may be different, it may even be a different ladder, but it's onward and upward just the same. You may not be known by which fork you use for the fish these days, but you will be known by which key you use for your *Finnegan's Wake*.

# MAN AGAINST DARKNESS

W. T. STACE



## I

The Catholic bishops of America recently issued a statement in which they said that the chaotic and bewildered state of the modern world is due to man's loss of faith, his abandonment of God and religion. For my part I believe in no religion at all. Yet I entirely agree with the bishops. It is no doubt an oversimplification to speak of *the* cause of so complex a state of affairs as the tortured condition of the world today. Its causes are doubtless multitudinous. Yet allowing for some element of oversimplification, I say that the bishops' assertion is substantially true.

M. Jean-Paul Sartre, the French existentialist philosopher, labels himself an atheist. Yet his views seem to me plainly to support the statement of the bishops. So long as there was believed to be a God in the sky, he says, men could regard him as the source of their moral ideals. The universe, created and governed by a fatherly God, was a friendly habitation for man. We could be sure that, however great the evil in the world, good in the end would triumph and the forces of evil would be routed. With the disappearance of God from the sky all this has changed. Since the world is not ruled by a spiritual being, but rather by blind forces, there cannot be any ideals, moral or otherwise, in the universe outside us. Our ideals, therefore, must proceed only from our own minds; they are our own inventions. Thus the world which surrounds us is nothing but an immense spiritual emptiness. It is a dead universe. We do not live in a universe which is on the side of our values. It is completely indifferent to them.

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Years ago Mr. Bertrand Russell, in his essay *A Free Man's Worship*, said much the same thing.

Such in outline, but even more purposeless, more void of meaning, is the world which Science presents for our belief. Amid such a world, if anywhere, our ideals henceforward must find a home. . . . Blind to good and evil, reckless of destruction, omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way, for man, condemned today to lose his dearest, tomorrow himself to pass through the gate of darkness, it remains only to cherish, ere yet the blow falls, the lofty thoughts that ennoble his little day, . . . to worship at the shrine his own hands have built, . . . to sustain alone, a weary but unyielding Atlas, the world that his own ideals have fashioned despite the trampling march of unconscious power.

It is true that Mr. Russell's personal attitude to the disappearance of religion is quite different from either that of M. Sartre or the bishops or myself. The bishops think it a calamity. So do I. M. Sartre finds it "very distressing." And he berates as shallow the attitude of those who think that without God the world can go on just the same as before, as if nothing had happened. This creates for mankind, he thinks, a terrible crisis. And in this I agree with him. Mr. Russell, on the other hand, seems to believe that religion has done more harm than good in the world, and that its disappearance will be a blessing. But his picture of the world, and of the modern mind, is the same as that of M. Sartre. He stresses the *purposelessness* of the universe, the facts that man's ideals are his own creations, that the universe outside him in no way supports them, that man is alone and friendless in the world.

Mr. Russell notes that it is science which has produced this situation. There is no doubt that this is correct. But the way in which it has come about is not generally understood. There is a popular belief that some particular scientific discoveries or theories, such as the Darwinian theory of evolution, or the views of geologists about the age of the earth, or a series of such discoveries, have done the damage. It would be foolish to deny that these discoveries have had a great effect in undermining religious dogmas. But this account does not at all go to the root of the matter. Religion can probably outlive any scientific discoveries which could be made. It can accommodate itself to them. The root cause of the decay of faith has not been any particular discovery of science, but rather the general spirit of science and certain basic assumptions upon which modern science, from the seventeenth century onwards, has proceeded.

## II

It was Galileo and Newton—notwithstanding that Newton himself was a deeply religious man—who destroyed the old comfort-

able picture of a friendly universe governed by spiritual values. And this was effected, not by Newton's discovery of the law of gravitation nor by any of Galileo's brilliant investigations, but by the general picture of the world which these men and others of their time made the basis of the science, not only of their own day, but of all succeeding generations down to the present. That is why the century immediately following Newton, the eighteenth century, was notoriously an age of religious skepticism. Skepticism did not have to wait for the discoveries of Darwin and the geologists in the nineteenth century. It flooded the world immediately after the age of the rise of science.

Neither the Copernican hypothesis nor any of Newton's or Galileo's particular discoveries were the real causes. Religious faith might well have accommodated itself to the new astronomy. The real turning point between the medieval age of faith and the modern age of unfaith came when the scientists of the seventeenth century turned their backs upon what used to be called "final causes." The final cause of a thing or event meant the purpose which it was supposed to serve in the universe, its cosmic purpose. What lay back of this was the presupposition that there is a cosmic order or plan and that everything which exists could in the last analysis be explained in terms of its place in this cosmic plan, that is, in terms of its purpose.

Plato and Aristotle believed this, and so did the whole medieval Christian world. For instance, if it were true that the sun and the moon were created and exist for the purpose of giving light to man, then this fact would explain why the sun and the moon exist. We might not be able to discover the purpose of everything, but everything must have a purpose. Belief in final causes thus amounted to a belief that the world is governed by purposes, presumably the purposes of some overruling mind. This belief was not the invention of Christianity. It was basic to the whole of Western civilization, whether in the ancient pagan world or in Christendom, from the time of Socrates to the rise of science in the seventeenth century.

The founders of modern science—for instance, Galileo, Kepler, and Newton—were mostly pious men who did not doubt God's purposes. Nevertheless they took the revolutionary step of consciously and deliberately expelling the idea of purpose as controlling nature from their new science of nature. They did this on the ground that inquiry into purposes is useless for what science aims at: namely, the prediction and control of events. To predict an eclipse, what you have to know is not its purpose but its causes. Hence science from the seventeenth century onwards became exclusively an inquiry into causes. The conception of purpose in the world was ignored and frowned on. This, though silent and almost unnoticed, was the greatest revolution in human history, far outweighing in importance any of the political revolutions whose thunder has reverberated through the world.

For it came about in this way that for the past three hundred years there has been growing up in men's minds, dominated as they are by science, a new imaginative picture of the world. The world, according to this new picture, is purposeless, senseless, meaningless. Nature is nothing but matter in motion. The motions of matter are governed, not by any purpose, but by blind forces and laws. Nature on this view, says Whitehead—to whose writings I am indebted in this part of my paper—is “merely the hurrying of material, endlessly, meaninglessly.” You can draw a sharp line across the history of Europe dividing it into two epochs of very unequal length. The line passes through the lifetime of Galileo. European man before Galileo—whether ancient pagan or more recent Christian—thought of the world as controlled by plan and purpose. After Galileo European man thinks of it as utterly purposeless. This is the great revolution of which I spoke.

It is this which has killed religion. Religion could survive the discoveries that the sun, not the earth, is the center; that men are descended from simian ancestors, that the earth is hundreds of millions of years old. These discoveries may render out of date some of the details of older theological dogmas, may force their restatement in new intellectual frameworks. But they do not touch the essence of the religious vision itself, which is the faith that there is plan and purpose in the world, that the world is a moral order, that in the end all things are for the best. This faith may express itself through many different intellectual dogmas, those of Christianity, of Hinduism, of Islam. All and any of these intellectual dogmas may be destroyed without destroying the essential religious spirit. But that spirit cannot survive destruction of belief in a plan and purpose of the world, for that is the very heart of it. Religion can get on with any sort of astronomy, geology, biology, physics. But it cannot get on with a purposeless and meaningless universe.

If the scheme of things is purposeless and meaningless, then the life of man is purposeless and meaningless too. Everything is futile, all efforts are in the end worthless. A man may, of course, still pursue disconnected ends, money, fame, art, science, and may gain pleasure from them. But his life is hollow at the center. Hence the dissatisfied, disillusioned, restless spirit of modern man.

The picture of a meaningless world, and a meaningless human life, is, I think, the basic theme of much modern art and literature. Certainly it is the basic theme of modern philosophy. According to the most characteristic philosophies of the modern period from Hume in the eighteenth century to the so-called positivists of today, the world is just what it is, and that is the end of all inquiry. There is no reason for its being what it is. Everything might just as well have been quite different, and there would have been no reason for that

contains, there is nothing more which could be said, even by an omniscient being. To ask any question about *why* things are thus, or what purpose their being so serves, is to ask a senseless question, because they serve no purpose at all. For instance, there is for modern philosophy no such thing as the ancient problem of evil. For this once famous question presupposes that pain and misery, though they seem so inexplicable and irrational to us, must ultimately subserve some rational purpose, must have their places in the cosmic plan. But this is nonsense. There is no such overruling rationality in the universe. Belief in the ultimate irrationality of everything is the quintessence of what is called the modern mind.

It is true that, parallel with the philosophies which are typical of the modern mind, preaching the meaninglessness of the world, there has run a line of idealistic philosophies whose contention is that the world is after all spiritual in nature and that moral ideals and values are inherent in its structure. But most of these idealisms were simply philosophical expressions of romanticism, which was itself no more than an unsuccessful counterattack of the religious against the scientific view of things. They perished, along with romanticism in literature and art, about the beginning of the present century, though of course they still have a few adherents.

At the bottom these idealistic systems of thought were rationalizations of man's wishful thinking. They were born of the refusal of men to admit the cosmic darkness. They were comforting illusions within the warm glow of which the more tender-minded intellectuals sought to shelter themselves from the icy winds of the universe. They lasted a little while. But they are shattered now, and we return once more to the vision of a purposeless world.

### III

Along with the run of the religious vision there went the run of moral principles and indeed of all values. If there is a cosmic purpose, if there is in the nature of things a drive towards goodness, then our moral systems will derive their validity from this. But if our moral rules do not proceed from something outside us in the nature of the universe—whether we say it is God or simply the universe itself—then they must be our own inventions. Thus it came to be believed that moral rules must be merely an expression of our own likes and dislikes. But likes and dislikes are notoriously variable. What pleases one man, people, or culture displeases another. Therefore morals are wholly relative.

This obvious conclusion from the idea of purposeless world made its appearance in Europe immediately after the rise of science, for instance in the philosophy of Hobbes. Hobbes saw at once that if there is no purpose in the world there are no values either. "Good



and evil," he writes, "are names that signify our appetites and aversions; which in different tempers, customs, and doctrines of men are different . . . Every man calleth that which pleaseth him, good, and that which displeaseth him, evil."

This doctrine of the relativity of morals, though it has recently received an impetus from the studies of anthropologists, was thus really implicit in the whole scientific mentality. It is disastrous for morals because it destroys their entire traditional foundation. That is why philosophers who see the danger signals, from the time at least of Kant, have been trying to give to morals a new foundation, that is, a secular or nonreligious foundation. This attempt may very well be intellectually successful. Such a foundation, independent of the religious view of the world, might well be found. But the question is whether it can ever be a *practical* success, that is, whether apart from its logical validity and its influence with intellectuals, it can ever replace among the masses of men the lost religious foundation. On that question hangs perhaps the future of civilization. But meanwhile disaster is overtaking us.

The widespread belief in "ethical relativity" among philosophers, psychologists, ethnologists, and sociologists is the theoretical counterpart of the repudiation of principle which we see all around us, especially in international affairs, the field in which morals have always had the weakest foothold. No one any longer effectively believes in moral principles except as the private prejudices either of individual men or of nations or cultures. This is the inevitable consequence of the doctrine of ethical relativity, which in turn is the inevitable consequence of believing in a purposeless world.

Another characteristic of our spiritual state is loss of belief in the freedom of the will. This also is a fruit of the scientific spirit, though not of any particular scientific discovery. Science has been built up on the basis of determinism, which is the belief that every event is completely determined by a chain of causes and is therefore theoretically predictable beforehand. It is true that recent physics seems to challenge this. But so far as its practical consequences are concerned, the damage has long ago been done. A man's actions, it was argued, are as much events in the natural world as is an eclipse of the sun. It follows that men's actions are as theoretically predictable as an eclipse. But if it is certain now that John Smith will murder Joseph Jones at 2.15 P.M. on January 1, 1963, what possible meaning can it have to say that when that time comes John Smith will be *free* to choose whether he will commit the murder or not? And if he is not free, how can he be held responsible?

It is true that the whole of this argument can be shown by a competent philosopher to be a tissue of fallacies—or at least I claim that it can. But the point is that the analysis required to show this

is much too subtle to be understood by the average entirely unphilosophical man. Because of this, the argument against free will is generally swallowed whole by the unphilosophical. Hence the thought that man is not free, that he is the helpless plaything of forces over which he has no control, has deeply penetrated the modern mind. We hear of economic determinism, cultural determinism, historical determinism. We are not responsible for what we do because our glands control us, or because we are the products of environment or heredity. Not moral self-control, but the doctor, the psychiatrist, the educationist, must save us from doing evil. Pills and injections in the future are to do what Christ and the prophets have failed to do. Of course I do not mean to deny that doctors and educationists can and must help. And I do not mean in any way to belittle their efforts. But I do wish to draw attention to the weakening of moral controls, the greater or less repudiation of personal responsibility which, in the popular thinking of the day, result from these tendencies of thought.

## IV

What, then, is to be done? Where are we to look for salvation from the evils of our time? All the remedies I have seen suggested so far are, in my opinion, useless. Let us look at some of them.

Philosophers and intellectuals generally can, I believe, genuinely do something to help. But it is extremely little. What philosophers can do is to show that neither the relativity of morals nor the denial of free will really follows from the grounds which have been supposed to support them. They can also try to discover a genuine secular basis for morals to replace the religious basis which has disappeared. Some of us are trying to do these things. But in the first place philosophers unfortunately are not agreed about these matters, and their disputes are utterly confusing to the non-philosophers. And in the second place their influence is practically negligible because their analyses necessarily take place on a level on which the masses are totally unable to follow them.

The bishops, of course, propose as remedy a return to belief in God and in the doctrines of the Christian religion. Others think that a new religion is what is needed. Those who make these proposals fail to realize that the crisis in man's spiritual condition is something unique in history for which there is no sort of analogy in the past. They are thinking perhaps of the collapse of the ancient Greek and Roman religions. The vacuum then created was easily filled by Christianity, and it might have been filled by Mithraism if Christianity had not appeared. By analogy they think that Christianity might now be replaced by a new religion, or even that Christianity itself, if revived, might bring back health to men's lives.

But I believe that there is no analogy at all between our present

state and that of the European peoples at the time of the fall of paganism. Men had at that time lost their belief only in particular dogmas, particular embodiments of the religious view of the world. It had no doubt become incredible that Zeus and the other gods were living on the top of Mount Olympus. You could go to the top and find no trace of them. But the imaginative picture of a world governed by purpose, a world driving towards the good—which is the inner spirit of religion—had at that time received no serious shock. It had merely to re-embody itself in new dogmas, those of Christianity or some other religion. Religion itself was not dead in the world, only a particular form of it.

But now the situation is quite different. It is not merely that particular dogmas, like that of the virgin birth, are unacceptable to the modern mind. That is true, but it constitutes a very superficial diagnosis of the present situation of religion. Modern skepticism is of a wholly different order from that of the intellectuals of the ancient world. It has attacked and destroyed not merely the outward forms of the religious spirit, its particularized dogmas, but the very essence of that spirit itself, belief in a meaningful and purposeful world. For the founding of a new religion a new Jesus Christ or Buddha would have to appear, in itself a most unlikely event and one for which in any case we cannot afford to sit and wait. But even if a new prophet and a new religion did appear, we may predict that they would fail in the modern world. No one for long would believe in them, for modern men have lost the vision, basic to all religion, of an ordered plan and purpose of the world. They have before their minds the picture of a purposeless universe, and such a world-picture must be fatal to any religion at all, not merely to Christianity.

We must not be misled by occasional appearances of a revival of the religious spirit. Men, we are told, in their disgust and disillusionment at the emptiness of their lives, are turning once more to religion, or are searching for a new message. It may be so. We must expect such wishful yearnings of the spirit. We must expect men to wish back again the light that is gone, and to try to bring it back. But however they may wish and try, the light will not shine again,—not at least in the civilization to which we belong.

Another remedy commonly proposed is that we should turn to science itself, or the scientific spirit, for our salvation. Mr. Russell and Professor Dewey both make this proposal, though in somewhat different ways. Professor Dewey seems to believe that discoveries in sociology, the application of scientific method to social and political problems, will rescue us. This seems to me to be utterly naive. It is not likely that science, which is basically the cause of our spiritual troubles, is likely also to produce the cure for them. Also it lies in the nature of science that, though it can teach us the best means for

achieving our ends, it can never tell us what ends to pursue. It cannot give us any ideals. And our trouble is about ideals and ends, not about the means for reaching them.

## v

No civilization can live without ideals, or to put it in another way, without a firm faith in moral ideas. Our ideals and moral ideas have in the past been rooted in religion. But the religious basis of our ideals has been undermined, and the superstructure of ideals is plainly tottering. None of the commonly suggested remedies on examination seems likely to succeed. It would therefore look as if the early death of our civilization were inevitable.

Of course we know that it is perfectly possible for individual men, very highly educated men, philosophers, scientists, intellectuals in general, to live moral lives without any religious convictions. But the question is whether a whole civilization, a whole family of peoples, composed almost entirely of relatively uneducated men and women, can do this.

It follows, of course, that if we could make the vast majority of men as highly educated as the very few are now, we might save the situation. And we are already moving slowly in that direction through the techniques of mass education. But the critical question seems to concern the time-lag. Perhaps in a few hundred years most of the population will, at the present rate, be sufficiently highly educated and civilized to combine high ideals with an absence of religion. But long before we reach any such stage, the collapse of our civilization may have come about. How are we to live through the intervening period?

I am sure that the first thing we have to do is to face the truth, however bleak it may be, and then next we have to learn to live with it. Let me say a word about each of these two points. What I am urging as regards the first is complete honesty. Those who wish to resurrect Christian dogmas are not, of course, consciously dishonest. But they have that kind of unconscious dishonesty which consists in lulling oneself with opiates and dreams. Those who talk of a new religion are merely hoping for a new opiate. Both alike refuse to face the truth that there is, in the universe outside man, no spirituality, no regard for values, no friend in the sky, no help or comfort for man of any sort. To be perfectly honest in the admission of this fact, not to seek shelter in new or old illusions, not to indulge in wishful dreams about this matter, this is the first thing we shall have to do.

I do not urge this course out of any special regard for the sanctity of truth in the abstract. It is not self-evident to me that truth is the supreme value to which all else must be sacrificed. Might not the discoverer of a truth which would be fatal to mankind be justified in

suppressing it, even in teaching men a falsehood? Is truth more valuable than goodness and beauty and happiness? To think so is to invent yet another absolute, another religious delusion in which Truth with a capital T is substituted for God. The reason why we must now boldly and honestly face the truth that the universe is non-spiritual and indifferent to goodness, beauty, happiness, or truth is not that it would be wicked to suppress it, but simply that it is too late to do so, so that in the end we cannot do anything else but face it. Yet we stand on the brink, dreading the icy plunge. We need courage. We need honesty.

Now about the other point, the necessity of learning to live with the truth. This means learning to live virtuously and happily, or at least contentedly, without illusions. And this is going to be extremely difficult because what we have now begun dimly to perceive is that human life in the past, or at least human happiness, has almost wholly depended upon illusions. It has been said that man lives by truth, and that the truth will make us free. Nearly the opposite seems to me to be the case. Mankind has managed to live only by means of lies, and the truth may very well destroy us. If one were a Bergsonian one might believe that nature deliberately puts illusions into our souls in order to induce us to go on living.

The illusions by which men have lived seem to be of two kinds. First, there is what one may perhaps call the Great Illusion—I mean the religious illusion that the universe is moral and good, that it follows a wise and noble plan, that it is gradually generating some supreme value, that goodness is bound to triumph in it. Secondly, there is a whole host of minor illusions on which human happiness nourishes itself. How much of human happiness notoriously comes from the illusions of the lover about his beloved? Then again we work and strive because of the illusions connected with fame, glory, power, or money. Banners of all kinds, flags, emblems, insignia, ceremonials, and rituals are invariably symbols of some illusion or other. The British Empire, the connection between mother country and dominions, is partly kept going by illusions surrounding the notion of kingship. Or think of the vast amount of human happiness which is derived from the illusion of supposing that if some nonsense syllable, such as “sir” or “count” or “lord” is pronounced in conjunction with our names, we belong to a superior order of people.

There is plenty of evidence that human happiness is almost wholly based upon illusions of one kind or another. But the scientific spirit, or the spirit of truth, is the enemy of illusions and therefore the enemy of human happiness. That is why it is going to be so difficult to live with the truth.

There is no reason why we should have to give up the host of minor illusions which render life supportable. There is no reason

why the lover should be scientific about the loved one. Even the illusions of fame and glory may persist. But without the Great Illusion, the illusion of a good, kindly, and purposeful universe, we shall *have* to learn to live. And to ask this is really no more than to ask that we become genuinely civilized beings and not merely sham civilized beings.

I can best explain the difference by a reminiscence. I remember a fellow student in my college days, an ardent Christian, who told me that if he did not believe in a future life, in heaven and hell, he would rape, murder, steal, and be a drunkard. That is what I call being a sham civilized being. On the other hand, not only could a Huxley, a John Stuart Mill, a David Hume, live great and fine lives without any religion, but a great many others of us, quite obscure persons, can at least live decent lives without it.

To be genuinely civilized means to be able to walk straightly and to live honorably without the props and crutches of one or another of the childish dreams which have so far supported men. That such a life is likely to be ecstatically happy I will not claim. But that it can be lived in quiet content, accepting resignedly what cannot be helped, not expecting the impossible, and thankful for small mercies, this I would maintain. That it will be difficult for men in general to learn this lesson I do not deny. But that it will be impossible I would not admit since so many have learned it already.

Man has not yet grown up. He is not adult. Like a child he cries for the moon and lives in a world of fantasies. And the race as a whole has perhaps reached the great crisis of its life. Can it grow up as a race in the same sense as individual men grow up? Can man put away childish things and adolescent dreams? Can he grasp the real world as it actually is, stark and bleak, without its romantic or religious halo, and still retain his ideals, striving for great ends and noble achievements? If he can, all may yet be well. If he cannot, he will probably sink back into the savagery and brutality from which he came, taking a humble place once more among the lower animals.

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## *PART IV*

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# ***STYLE AND THE PUBLIC STANCE: EXPERIENCE AND DECORUM***

The essays we have just read depend for part of their impact or persuasiveness upon the tone, or attitude, conveyed by the speaker. The techniques of persuasion were likened to the art of selling because they share certain problems in common, namely, those of perceiving and responding appropriately to the needs and wishes of an audience. We know that authors writing for **Consumer Reports** or **Harper's Magazine** probably have a good idea of the economic and educational level of their readers. But successful argument presupposes, besides adequate audience analysis, an

appropriate speaking tone. For the most part, the arguments in the preceding group relied on the arrangement of logical constructs and physical evidence; the speakers based the burden of argument on words and things.

But we can imagine cases in which the tone of an argument can far outweigh the importance of the evidence presented or consistency maintained. The Gettysburg Address is only one example in which what is said about the world is far less important than the majestic attitude of the speaker. Similarly, it is well known that inaugural speeches provide occasions for revealing the public stance of an individual. Popular idiom has decreed that this feature of persuasive language be called "image-making," which is an appropriate title, for it implies that a satisfactory emotional response may be anticipated by an argument, the bare facts of which might not adequately produce such a response. The image or picture is more immediately perceived, responded to, and held than, say, only the facts and figures of a complex argument. The tone of one's presentation is the stuff of inspiration and compulsion (as subliminal advertizing has shown).

We are talking in one sense about personal style. The television debates between John Kennedy and Richard Nixon are prime examples of argument of image-making. How many citizens who responded strongly emotionally one way or the other could have outlined the evidence and logic of the men's positions on Quemoy and Matsu? Some researchers believe that, where pure speech and its extensions through popular media are concerned, audiences respond less to the substance than to the tone of the speaker and to the nature of the circumstances in which a dialogue takes place.

Now tone has much to do with intonation (compare, for instance, "Mary has a *nice* personality" with "Mary has a nice personality"), and in general with the way the voice is cast. Physical carriage, and as has been suggested, even silence, can also be important components of image-making in communication. Advertisers have tried to make this area of investigation into a science, and certainly we can learn much about language if we attend to this matter of tone. The question of tone is especially important when we confront language used by public figures. Take, for example, the language of Supreme Court justices in the Escobedo case. Whom are these judges trying to persuade? What audience do they address? Since they all cite precedents, how can they possibly disagree with each other? The answer is, of course, not simple: the various opinions are couched in such a way, however, as to make proponents of their positions seem justified, while still allowing the decorum of the Court to remain intact. The question is, how does tone function here?

As a literary critic, Joan Webber's professional concern with



language, though different in many respects from that of the High Court, is quite similar in one important way. The judges of the Supreme Court explicate the Constitution with respect to certain issues; literary critics explicate literary works of art. Although Miss Webber addresses an academic audience, one probably weighted toward the humanities, implicit in her argument is an attack on the assumption that humanistic studies necessarily make people more human. Her argument is that, as presently constituted, literary studies may do little more than add to the cant and trivia of life. Miss Webber is urging at least some members of her audience to change their attitudes toward their work, toward literature—after which even changes in the curriculum might come easily. But perhaps her most controversial point deals with politics. While stating her own allegiance to such organizations as CORE, Miss Webber argues that the best literature in England was created by conservatives (with Milton as the sole exception). How are the radicals in her audience to respond? And how shall the conservatives respond to her assertion that the greatest men, as distinct from the greatest poets, are political radicals? Polarization of this kind might tend to distance speaker from audience. The speaker can avoid this danger by finding a common ground on which even sceptical members of her audience might give some measure of consent. And this is largely a matter of tone. How is tone handled in this example?

We see a quite different rhetorical strategy in James Baldwin's **The Fire Next Time**. Given the present situation in the United States, even the title of Mr. Baldwin's book might distance the author from certain potential readers. Similarly, since some Black Muslims publicly scorn the white race as "white devils," some readers might be put off by Baldwin's apparently sympathetic treatment of the Muslims. At the same time, Baldwin makes rather devastating remarks in comparing Christians with Muslims. How does this comparison work? In particular, how would the Christian who happens also to be Negro be expected to respond? And what if that Christian were "white"? When Baldwin accuses the white American of being "slothful," what does he mean? Does he imply a racist point?

Mr. Baldwin addresses himself to a most serious social problem in the United States. But he comments also on numerous issues which have no necessary connection with civil rights. For example, he links racial hatred with the fear of death. What help does he give the reader in perceiving this connection? Do points like this heighten or diminish the persuasive thrust of Baldwin's rhetoric? Repeatedly, Baldwin emphasizes the Negro as a victim of contemporary society. Does he ever depict the Negro as assailant? How do Baldwin's views coincide with those of Robert Coles? And what does Baldwin mean when he says that the Negro is well

placed to “ring down the curtain on the American Dream”?

Finally, James Baldwin remarks upon human nature, which he implies is basically selfish. Most people, as he sees it, get and keep, rather than give or share. Does Baldwin impute this selfishness to all men, regardless of color? What means for reconciliation between races does Baldwin advance, assuming that all men are self-seeking? In closely related observations, Baldwin seems to quarrel with American policy decisions based on what he thinks of as shifts in world power. Why does he question such decisions? What does he find wrong with political moves by the United States to “stay on top”? To what attitude does Baldwin attempt to persuade his audience? What audience is he addressing? How does he invite his reader to identify **with** him? This, after all, is the most important aspect of tone in any speaker. Speaker and audience must share important values with respect to the speaker’s message. Clearly, much of what Baldwin has to say seems critical of white Americans. Is his book, then, directed to a solely, or even a predominantly Negro audience? If so, what does he want that audience to do?

In another example of this group, we see that a most ticklish problem of tone confronts Dr. Clark Kerr. How does the president of a large state university defend himself against an implied charge of subversion? This was the tactical linguistic problem raised by the Thirteenth Report of [California] State Senate Fact-finding Subcommittee on Un-American Activities (1965). From a standpoint of tone, Dr. Kerr’s response is a model of its kind: the measured diction, the clipped sentences—even the punctuation—suggest reason and restraint, appropriate qualities in a university president. In the Preface, for example, we read:

The University of California is a famous institution. It is also large. It is also public. Being famous, large, and public, it is highly visible.

The simple, direct language may not convey much surprising information. That is not its purpose. These remarks are intended to persuade, to set a context in which the speaker and the audience share restraint as a value. The facts, the figures, the other forms of argument will come. The tone is an important means by which Dr. Kerr reaches for his audience.

Notice, for example, the use of numbers throughout the Analysis. Dr. Kerr was, of course, under no obligation to separate his points in this manner. Why does he do so? And notice the frequent parenthetical references to page numbers in the Report. Can we conclude, then, that punctuation is important to meaning? Notice, too, the frequent use of short sentences: “This is false.” How do style and tone mesh in such an argument? Finally, in selecting the order in which the subjects will be discussed, Dr. Kerr registers

a further rhetorical gain Why not begin the Analysis with an immediate denial of the charges against him? And incidentally, why not entitle this document "An Answer to the Thirteenth Report . . . "?

The matter of tone is exceedingly important and frequently difficult, which is why we are discussing it separately One may have a perfectly good idea, but it will not help him if he alienates his intended audience Self-asserted moral superiority is one of the least acceptable of public postures, and one of the most unsuccessful stances for the salesman of an idea or perspective Yet as Thomas Hobbes recognized, it is one of the most human If a truth, moral, political, or aesthetic, is so obvious, why do not all immediately consent to it?

Persuasion is an art, it is a performing art Whether we speak or write, in order to persuade we must retain the attention and good will of our audience To do well, we must know more than how to reason, more than how to analyze an audience, more than how to gather evidence, more than how to organize an argument. We must also observe the social amenities; we must know how to behave. It is only human to resent our opponent in debate, especially if the issue is important, particularly when he flatly refuses to speak to our most telling point. But any lapse of tone on our part strengthens the opponent's position The opponent, after all, may not be the only member of the audience Indeed, he may know quite well that if he earns our public insult, that will be a comment, not on him, but us



# VOCATION: LITERARY SCHOLARSHIP AND SOCIAL COMMITMENT

JOAN WEBBER



## I

I am a Professor of English; not long ago, I was a graduate student. As a student, I asked myself questions which my students now ask me—the large, embarrassing questions about the value and relevance of our profession to human existence. Then, I never found good answers. But as it is easier to find answers when you are held responsible for them, now, out of necessity, and thanks to my students, I know a little more than I used to know about why I have taken English literature for my province.

There has been much discussion of late, among educators, about the future of the liberal arts college. I think there is an equally deep, and permanent need for meaningful discussion of the value of the liberal arts to those who make these studies their profession. Students and teachers who could not conceive of any other life than that of scholarship have come to feel somehow guilty and/or demoralized about it. Not only does everyone tell them that they live in an ivory tower, but they themselves cannot always make sense out of their work. This essay does not pretend to set forth final answers. It is a private credo, formulated under fire, which I set forth here as an effort to stimulate further thought and discussion, either private or public. While I write specifically and in some detail about the field of

English literature, these same issues and analogous problems certainly confront all students and scholars in what we call the humanities.

Vocation, then, as I use the word, is the means by which life enables a man, spiritually, to be, and to sustain himself. Accepting vocation is saying "yes" to life, the opposite of what Satan does in Milton's poem: Satan's name is erased from the book of life. Anyone who reaches and studies English literature is confronted with a vocation that is sometimes ambiguous and always complex, and he cannot afford the mistake of thinking otherwise. Every time he makes a list of things he has to do, the length and variety of it sound absurd. His vocation can include writing, reading, and editing books, articles, stories, and poems, administering department and university affairs, and engaging in the work of professional organizations, teaching his students and listening to his teachers, walking a picket line; making speeches; trying to make an impression on the community without becoming too depressed by the community—and there are surely lots more.

Vocation and social commitment, that is to say, are not two different things: social commitment can be part of a vocation, together with our professional commitments, and if both are to flourish in us, we must understand how the two are relevant to one another, and what demands each can properly make. And we must try to make sure that one, either in its apparent relevance and immediacy, or in its actual hold upon us, does not diminish and is not diminished by our conception and practice of the other. Most of us whose profession is literature must keep literature at the center, the amount of time and energy that we can devote to other things being ordinarily subordinated to that. But the professional part of our lives—the part that is engaged in teaching and learning about art; and the other part—the part that is vulnerable and responsive to personal and social engagement, should ideally nourish one another, increase each other's point and relevance.

As teachers and students of literature, and as human beings, my colleagues and I are privileged to have a vocation that enables us to keep one foot in time and one in eternity, one in life and one in art. Among the innumerable problems and confusions inherent in learning how to do that are some which confront anyone committed both to literature and to life as it is evidenced in social reform movements. These all concern the differences and likenesses, the complex and simple relationships that exist between the studying of literature and the living of life.

## II

For us, the first and most immediate of these problems concerns the worth and relevance of our own professional lives. We seem to

relationship between art and life. Great art is supposed to nourish the soul and to create humanists capable of confronting their own and the world's problems. But it sometimes appears as we look about us that there is a singular paucity of evidence for such a claim. This problem is constantly in the minds of people entering graduate school for the first time, and is not answered, though it may sometimes be stifled, by the acquisition of a Ph.D. degree. If we cannot use literature to humanize ourselves, how can we hope that it will give us the ability to try to humanize others?

I must admit that literature never *promises* to make people human. Most of us would agree that the censors are wrong in their contention that literature makes people *inhuman*. Unfortunately, the reverse is also untrue. If it doesn't pervert, neither does it convert, automatically. It doesn't *promise*; it *allows*; a story or a poem is half a dialogue for which the reader furnishes the other half. There is no guarantee that every reader, even if very well trained, will be willing and able to furnish the other half.

Both an English professor and a truck driver form their characters out of their relationship with the life they are given, and one should be grateful in this fallen world to find largeness of soul in either one. Given that qualification, however, we have more right to expect humanity of a professor than of a truck driver, just because literature does *allow*, because there is that in literature which represents man at his highest, so that if one exposes himself honestly to that humanizing influence over a sufficient period of time, and consciously makes himself a bridge between literature and life, he can learn better how to be.

The value of making such a bridge is manifest in innumerable men whose lives have been both literary and humanitarian. Yet, despite such good examples, students continue to be disillusioned by their professors and professors by their colleagues. We expect professors and their students to share a dialogue of learning and discovery. Instead, professors require their students to learn to collate or compare manuscripts, to hunt for minute differences of spelling and punctuation; to memorize names of journals and the kinds of bibliographies published in each, to read second and third and fourth-rate literature, and to spend precious months and years of their lives writing analyses of this stuff; and to look forward to being judged not by the height of wisdom at which they have arrived, but by the weight of the manuscripts that already overfed journals have consented to publish under their names. The professors who set these requirements rarely give any explanation of what they mean. They seem to encourage the attitude that our work is a business or a trade, and nothing else; to stress the trivia of learning; or simply to pass on their worldweariness to their students by ignoring them altogether.

We are wrong to expect—and we do expect—college campuses at

least in the vicinity of the English department, to resemble the Garden of Eden. Men operate here as everywhere else by contraries, recognizing excellence by the way it contrasts with triviality. That is what postlapsarian life is like. But given this basic truth, there are, above and beyond it, in the expectations we have of the academic community and the disappointments we meet in it, two problems which are confused with one another. First, some things that look and feel meaningless would not present themselves in that way if some professor or other took time to explain what they mean. Second, some things really are *unnecessarily* meaningless, and should not be tolerated.

It is wrong to expect every professor to be a Renaissance man. In this age of specialization, learning seems often to be recklessly compartmentalized or departmentalized to such an extent that significance is lost. On the other hand, the degree of specialization that causes such compartmentalization, and which probably encourages the proliferation of articles dealing with minutiae, is also the means by which the twentieth century has achieved what no age before us has—a deep concern for the text that the author wrote. To achieve this apparently simple goal, it is essential that one scholar should be taken up with the establishment of certain minor seventeenth or eighteenth or nineteenth-century texts; another with linguistics, another with stylistics; another with literary history in a given limited period. Some of these interests sound more humane than others; but they are all necessary to an understanding of any text whose greatness is an accepted fact. The absence, in one's own field, of scholars versed in all these skills is a crippling handicap, and no one can do all of them, or more than one or two of them, alone. So we must, as students and as professors, become acquainted with, and introduce others to these disciplines. Only by this means can we discover which of them are most congenial to us, and learn at least something about the possibilities, in case of future need, of those which are not for us.

The professor and critic cannot himself be the poem. He can't recreate the work of art whole and splendid, or equal in his own life and teaching the accomplishment of Shakespeare or Milton. All he can do is point out things, with whatever pointer is most congenial to him as well as the poem. And the student and reader who does not expect a magic wand may perhaps find that what seemed to be meaningless exercises are steps and stages on the way to learning.

However, they will remain meaningless if no one troubles to make them mean. There are teachers who have become so absorbed in their partial effort that they have forgotten that, in and by itself, it has little human significance. There are others who neither know nor care whether it has any. But all these separate skills are worthless unless their human value can be demonstrated to us as human beings engaged in the world. In all graduate schools, a required course should be in-



stituted, to balance and explain the technical skills—a course entitled perhaps, “Literature and Culture,” “Literature and Literary Scholarship,” or “Literature and Belief.” Meanwhile, if one teacher neglects to demonstrate the value of his specialty, often another will demonstrate it. Every scholar, teacher, and student can in any case endeavor to do it for himself.

And there are certain abuses to which we need not add. If a graduate student has the imagination to figure out his own thesis topic—and he should have—he won’t have to accept the dregs of the imagination of an advisor who may already have given his best to the half dozen candidates who got there first. If I write one good article, the people for whom I ought to be writing will recognize it and remember me better than if I blossom into print every month or two with a note on this and a footnote on that. Any scholar will ordinarily welcome originality even if he doesn’t have it and isn’t used to it.

In the effort to follow a positive rather than a cynical course, we need less support than we sometimes like to believe. A Master’s candidate, given one compatible teacher, can do his work. For doctoral studies, the minimum requirement is a teacher, and a library. A professor also needs a library and two or three good students. With and beyond these, we need ourselves. In order to be in a place of humanity and scholarship, we must be human beings and scholars. And those of us who chose to study literature because it nourishes the soul must let it nourish ours, and let it sustain us even in the midst of the mechanics and the apparent trivia upon which its immortality depends.

My treatment of this first problem has implied in large part that one’s own professional house must be in order and its business satisfying, so that one may honestly move back and forth between it and social commitments without losing one’s bearings. If this first point ultimately depends upon the belief that what I learn in graduate school and use in my profession are the tools by which I come to understand what literature means, then the link between literature and the world and my justification for being what I am, must have to do with the character of literature. I should like, then, to turn to two interrelated problems concerning the relevance of literature to our lives. First, does art have any relationship to social commitment, to any of our daily efforts in the world to make the world more human? Second, can we honestly believe that art has anything to do with life at all?

### III

In some ways it is true that art and social commitment are unrelated, just because art and life are not the same thing, because they submit themselves to entirely different kinds of laws. To the extent that social commitment is political and left wing, for example, it has practically nothing to do with literature. If the same laws operated in

both worlds, we could not clearly judge the relative merit of Milton and Donne, because politically they lived on opposite sides of a fence that is still part of our lives.

A poll of the major writers in English would reveal that a great majority were either apolitical or conservative: witness, in our century, the only twentieth-century poets who can make any claim to greatness: W. B. Yeats, T. S. Eliot, Wallace Stevens, Robert Frost, Dylan Thomas. Poets of the thirties, who would be next in line, poets like Spender, Auden, C. Day Lewis, almost never wrote decent verse when they were celebrating Marxism. The only really great radical in our literature, Milton, wrote his best poetry after he had been forcibly retired from politics by the failure of his cause. Poetry cannot afford to particularize itself the way life must; when it does, it becomes propaganda.

The artist, as artist, has little faith in political change, but speaks in timeless themes, which appear in any political setting. Sir Thomas Browne, seventeenth-century scientist and man of letters, writes in his autobiographical *Religio Medici*:

To see our selves again, we need not look for Plato's year: every man is not only himself, there have been many Diogenes, and as many Timons, though but few of that name: men are lived over again, the world is now as it was in Ages past. . .

And Robert Frost, twentieth-century poet, thus affirms the worth of poetry:

There is always tragedy. That is what life is. But nothing is so composing to the spirit as composition. We make a little order where we are, and the big sweep of history on which we can have no effect doesn't overwhelm us.

The writer's concern, then, is primarily with the ways in which an individual man may live and move and have his being within, beside, or beyond the framework he is given, the ways in which an individual man succeeds or fails in achieving himself, against the evil or indifference within or without. Shakespeare as he matures moves from showing the bad society violently overthrown in *Richard II* and *Hamlet*, to showing it passively resisted in *King Lear*, to showing it outwitted and transcended in *Antony and Cleopatra* and *The Tempest*. And even at the beginning he never suggests that the political or social order be changed, only, to some extent, the personnel governing that order.

At the same time, though, again and again, we see the artist insisting that *one does what one can*. The Anglo-Saxon *Battle of Maldon*,

in the tenth century, records a defeat more impressive than victory; its tone is reflected in this one line, spoken near the end of the poem, by a warrior in the losing army I translate

*Courage shall be the bolder, heart the keener,  
spirit shall be greater, as our power grows less*

Cordelia, in *King Lear*, is reunited with her father, after all that has happened makes them both know that there is unmitigated evil in the world, and that that evil is part of their own flesh and blood, Goneril and Regan. Again, there is spiritual triumph in her defeat

*For thee, oppressed king, am I cast down,  
Myself would else outfrown false fortune's frown  
Shall we not see these daughters and these sisters?*

Faulkner, in *The Sound and the Fury*, recording the doom of an old Southern white family and the life of their servants, thus concludes a listing of Compsons

*These others were not Compsons. They were black.  
T P . . .  
Frony .  
Luster .  
They endured*

Art is not life. It is an abstraction, a refinement, a Platonizing of it. It is unique experience made typical, but it is not generalization into which our own particular experience can always fit. I am not like a character in Shakespeare's plays, because these characters are Being, and I am becoming; because I am living from moment to moment in time, whereas they are fixed in an eternal action, out of time.

But art creates man in his own image, and then frees him of all the human complications that keep him from being a tragic hero every day. By looking at art, in fact, we learn what Being means. Great art constantly shears away the trivia that form so much of our existence, and presents us with the essentials, with truth, with what transcends time. "Shall we not see these daughters and these sisters?"

If we attend profoundly to what art *is*, then we may learn better to become. For in the face of such utterances, commitments to life are easier and more obvious. In the face of the racial crisis which exists in our country today, the only statement worthy of the art which Cordelia represents is in fact a statement which many people are daily enacting: "Racial injustice in this country is only going to go on over my body"—hence demonstrations, sit-ins, kneel-ins. There are

other statements possible and current, ranging from the accusation that the demonstrators are publicity hunters to the contention that "I want to give money but I can't afford (for one reason or another) to get involved." Such statements, if referred to Cordelia, sound a bit hollow.

I believe then that art is absolutely committed to life, and that it can help us to live better if we submit our will to its wisdom. If we neglect to do that, then art means nothing at all—for it can only have meaning in terms of man's relation to it. I am not suggesting that everyone should joint a picket line; I have chosen that illustration because it most dramatically symbolizes all the varied activities of the Congress of Racial Equality, and because CORE is an organization very close to *my* heart. I suggest only that art and life are related as eternity and time, and that unless there is a constant interplay between the two, of meaning and action, art is barren, and life is more limited than it needs to be.

The question of whether any relationship at all exists between life and literature has now to some extent been answered, but there is more to be said directly on this point. The case for the negative can perhaps be summarized as follows: the best men in the world have not read all the best that has been thought and said, those who have are not the best men; life is artless and art is lifeless, and that is just because life exists in time and art is timeless. One of many possible illustrations of the lack of relation between life and art might be that the Puritans of the seventeenth century changed history, but, with two great exceptions, made no art. In this century, as then, the conservatives seem to be producing the great literature, while the activists produce great men. What the activists are also doing, though, is helping to make possible the art of the future. For the time of Yeats and Stevens is over. And I can see nowhere else in America, except in the spirit of people who are working for peace and for integration, the kind of belief in humanity that great art requires. They are not going to make the art themselves; their creativity, like that of the Puritans, is spent in action—though they have an essayist in James Baldwin, just as the Puritans had one in Milton. And perhaps not Baldwin, but Baldwin's son or grandson, when this movement is spent, will be able to base upon its spirit (not upon its day-to-day behavior) his contribution to the great art of the next age. That art may have no apparent relationship at all to what is happening now—but it will draw its strength, its humanism, and its joy from the faith, hope, and love of our conflicts.

And I want to suggest that in the activities of CORE and SANE, among many other activities in which one can feel oneself most fully alive, time comes closest to eternity, and life to art, if only in the fullness of humanity and the mastery over inhumanity which is here

required. The people who are involved in one way or another in non-violent action make mistakes that are sometimes costly; because, like English professors, they are human. But as a body they have a purity of dedication that enables them to achieve nonviolence, love of those who resist their aims, and joy. One learns to be at home in the world by facing the evil that the world contains, by learning to master his own inhumanity, and by recognizing the humanity of his opponent; and these are the explicit ways of nonviolence. There is a moral strength here that could be the salvation of our society, and which, if defeated, could give way to the tragedy of our society. This strength is born of the achievement of nonviolence, which is as much a triumph over life's trivia as art is; and the purity of that achievement comes as close as man can come to the purity of art.

There is sometimes a stillness on the picket line that is like the stillness of great art. It comes from a composure, in the face of potential danger and violence, which is directly comparable to the composition of art. (Remember Frost uses those two words together: "There is nothing so composing to the spirit as composition") This stillness, this achievement, also characterizes other moments in life in which one is able briefly to become fully realized and at home in one's humanity, and briefly to experience the Being, the immortality of art.

Art sometimes seems so composed, so artificial, so unputtying and still as to be irrelevant to life, we can penetrate that surface only if we are willing not merely to use it as something to get a thesis or paper out of, but to let it use us, and to see beneath that cold surface the central problems of our lives. Life seems so disorderly, so trivial, so temporal and meaningless as to be unrelated to art. But again, if we commit ourselves utterly to life, we can find human order and dignity beneath the disorderly surface, and that order and dignity are what have always inspired the eternal and noble order of art. Art and life seem unrelated only when one fails wholly to submit oneself to both, to find at the heart of each an image of the other.

#### IV

All this leads to a final question even supposing what I have said to be appropriate, who has time both for literary scholarship and for social commitment? I would give a short answer to that. I have tried to suggest that the establishment of oneself in both life and art can bring about a relationship between time and eternity that enriches time. One has time for what one has energy for. Constantly recharged in both directions, a person can turn back and forth among these varied lives always with a renewal of strength and purpose. There are certainly many occasions when one has to say, "I can't do that because my classes come first, or because my writing comes first," and for most

of us, they always will and should. Only if our professional lives are central and satisfying can we reach out in a satisfying way to other things. Social commitment should not be made a kind of therapy. But I do believe that the more we allow life to possess us, the less we want to hold back from it a reservation here and another there, where nothing would have grown anyway, and the more we have time to be whatever life may really intend.

**Analysis of the  
THIRTEENTH REPORT OF THE STATE  
SENATE FACTFINDING SUBCOMMITTEE  
ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES**

CLARK KERR



*PREFACE*

- When the winds of controversy stir society, they often stir a university even more. A university, by its nature, is a major arena where struggles take place over controversial issues.

- The University of California is a famous institution. It is also large. It is also public. Being famous, large, and public, it is highly visible.

- When controversial issues are debated at the University of California, the struggles are likely to be unusually open to public review and comment

- The University of California has two policies, in particular, which have been the subject of continuous controversy.

- (a) The policy against the employment of Communists; and,

- (b) The policy in favor of the open forum.

- Some on the left do not like the first of these policies. Some on the right do not like the second.

- Yet these two policies—the one against the employment of Communists and the other in favor of the open forum—are the policies or practices of the greatest of American universities. Both are accepted because universities are devoted to the search for truth, through open

discussion, through conflict of idea with idea, by people who are free to seek the truth. The University stands committed to these two policies and to their effective application. Through these and related policies, it best fosters the pursuit of truth and best provides service to the people of the State of California.

- It would be a misuse of time and effort to respond to all attacks on the University and its policies—including the two policies noted above. But some attacks are sufficiently widely circulated to warrant response. Such an attack is the *Thirteenth Report of the State Senate Factfinding Subcommittee on Un-American Activities*. It follows attacks on the University which have been made in many prior reports of the Committee. The current *Report* repeats many allegations from the earlier reports. It is, however, unique in its almost exclusive concentration on the University of California. The following analysis of the current *Report* has been undertaken reluctantly but with the conviction that the *Report* should not stand unchallenged in the legislative records of our State

Clark Kerr  
October, 1965

I.

On June 18, 1965, the closing day of the session, there was filed with the Clerk of the State Senate in Sacramento a stack of some 100 pages of "uncorrected" galley proofs. These sheets comprised the *Thirteenth Report of the State Senate Factfinding Subcommittee on Un-American Activities*. The galley proofs contained a letter of transmittal over the names of Subcommittee Chairman Hugh M. Burns and members Aaron W. Quick and Stephen P. Teale. It proved necessary, however, to pencil out Senator Teale's name; he declined to sign the *Report*, subsequently commenting.

"Most anyone who reads the report could see why I didn't sign it. It took 200 pages to say what could have been said in six pages, so far as factual material was concerned. The balance is just drivel of old Communist stuff—quotes from old newspapers and from old reports of the same committee. "I don't consider it particularly valuable to refer to your own (past) writing to justify what you are writing.

"The impression I got was that simply by association, interspersing paragraphs about recent troubles at the University with totally unrelated activities of the last 20 years, we are trying to imply that all recent campus action was a Communist plot.

"Had there been any concrete evidence of this, I would have gone along with the report. But I didn't see any such evidence." (See Appendix A )

Authorship of the *Report* has been attributed to Richard E.



Combs, Counsel to the Subcommittee. Senator Burns has been quoted as saying that the *Report* was "verbose and redundant" and that it was submitted too late for the Subcommittee to go over it and make changes. In the same interview, he was quoted as saying he had thought seriously about having the *Report* rewritten "and boiled down" for submission to the 1966 Legislature, but that he had decided it was so "important and timely" that it should be released in its present form, though Senator Burns remarked to one reporter that "there's going to be a new understanding with the staff before our next report" (See Appendix B)

In any event, sections of the *Report* were immediately made available to the press (in some instances the day prior to their being filled with the Senate), and it soon became apparent that the *Report* had directed its almost exclusive attention to the University of California. The University had no time to study or prepare a careful analysis of the *Report* before the headlines appeared. But the immediate denials and clarifications by persons featured in the *Report* quickly made clear that the *Report* ought to be read with serious reservations (See Appendices C through E). My own statement of June 18 follows

The University is known throughout the world for its scholastic excellence, its outstanding faculty and its ability to expand rapidly and effectively to meet the growing demands for higher education in this state. This reputation will not, I am sure, be affected by the fact that the University has been made the principal target of the report released today. Significantly after one reads all the many pages of the report, there is no substantiated claim that any member of the Communist Party is employed by the University. The policy of the University prohibits the employment of Communists, and the report provides no evidence to the contrary.

Among the inaccuracies in the report is one I should particularly like to correct. The suggestion that Governor Brown at any time went back on any agreement with me during the recent student disturbances is completely false. He never did. I have never thought so and I have never said so.

The University has now had time to prepare an analysis which is brief but entirely sufficient, we believe, to enable a reader to assign the appropriate degree of credence to the *Report*.

Examination of the attached analysis reveals that:

- The *Thirteenth Report* contains no actionable evidence against any single one of the University's more than 40,000 staff members.
- It contains a large number of minor errors and a substantial number of serious errors.
- It indulges in opinions and conclusions about sympathy toward

Communism on the part of University personnel with no sound basis in fact.

- It attempts to relate somehow to the current scene events which happened decades ago or thousands of miles away or both.
- It presents half-truths, with resultant distortions, about items on which the whole truth was readily available to anyone who sought it.

In view of these findings, I am respectfully requesting that the Committee, in the best interests of the people of California:

1. Voluntarily remove the *Thirteenth Report* from the protection of legislative privilege so that its contents may be examined fairly and with due process before the courts, or
2. Officially withdraw the *Thirteenth Report* from issuance because of its many errors and innuendos which have resulted in such widespread and harmful publicity to individual staff members and to the entire University of California.

I have publicly stated that I would be willing to appear before the Committee at a public hearing. If, after study of this analysis, the Committee wishes me to appear at a public hearing, I would, of course, be willing to do so.

Senator Burns had confidence that his Committee could perform a valuable public service by working with California educational institutions. Early in 1952, he met with a number of university and college presidents to explore means of liaison—the so-called “contact man” system—between these institutions and the Committee. President Robert G. Sproul, describing the conference at a meeting of the University’s Academic Senate, said:

He [Senator Burns] expressed the belief that the proposed exchanges of information would enable his Committee to discharge its obligation to the Legislature and the people of California without giving harmful publicity to innocent individuals and institutions, and the colleges and universities to implement more effectively the anti-Communist policy to which they have committed themselves.

It appears to me that Senator Burns’ beliefs about the values of the arrangement have proven unfounded. I think he may also feel a sense of disappointment:

1. The Committee’s *Reports*, and particularly the *Thirteenth Report*, have resulted in a great deal of what can only be described as “harmful publicity to innocent individuals and institutions. . . .”
2. The Committee has in no instance that I know of helped the University of California “to implement more effectively the anti-Communist policy” to which it is indeed committed.

It would be a public service to attempt to draw a clear line be-

tween those who are committed to fascist or Communist totalitarianism and those of the democratic faith. Democratic organizations can best be protected, as many trade unions, universities and other organizations have found, by drawing this line clearly and fairly. Blurring the line by making irresponsible accusations or innuendos tends to destroy respect for more responsible and accurate delineations and, by so doing, makes it more difficult to protect and strengthen our democratic institutions.

I respect the members of the Committee and I understand how greatly they wish to serve well the people of California whom they represent. I am confident that they will study this analysis with care. I trust that it will be sufficient to persuade the Committee of the merit of my requests that the *Report* be withdrawn from issuance or removed from the protection of legislative privilege.

## II.

Before proceeding to an analysis of specific points in the *Report*, I should like to comment briefly on three general points that I believe deserve particular emphasis:

### 1 GENERAL CONCLUSIONS ON THE ROLE OF COMMUNISTS AT BERKELEY IN 1964-65

The *Report* concludes that, primarily, Communist elements were responsible for the organization and direction of the student disturbances at Berkeley. The *Report* refers to the use of such "Communist" techniques as the united front, and cites "the generation of the class struggle concept that characterized the Berkeley rebellion of 1964-65" (p. 22).

The writers of the *Report* are, of course, entitled to their own opinions and conclusions. Most careful observers, including many listed in the Committee's own bibliography, have commented on the surprising lack of consistent ideology, Marxist or otherwise, in the student movement at Berkeley and have emphasized that the dispute centered around very specific issues and attitudes rather than around broad and uniform political positions. Only a few items in the literature of the student groups, such as a pamphlet about The Regents, featured the traditional "class struggle" concept. The techniques of civil disobedience and the sit-in were derived directly from the civil rights movement rather than from the historical and sometimes more violent methods of the Communists.

One outstanding authority has stated that the demonstration "was exploited by a few Communists for their own ends" but that it was "not Communist originated or controlled." That authority is Mr. J.

Edgar Hoover. My own observations lead me to agree with Mr. Hoover's conclusions

## 2. UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION'S POSITION ON COMMUNISM

The *Report* repeatedly makes allegations suggesting that the present University administration is sympathetic to Communism. It states (p. 52) that "the administration welcomes Communist organizations, throws the portals open to Communist speakers, and exhibits an easy tolerance of Communist activists that defies all reason." Again (pp. 53-54), it refers to "the general attitude toward Communism on the Berkeley campus having been demonstrated by the erosion of its security measures, the opening of the campus to Communist propaganda speakers, and the easy tolerance of pro-Communist faculty members. . . ." And in the section entitled "The Role of Clark Kerr" the *Report* speaks of "this free-wheeling tolerance toward Communism" (p. 68). Specific comment on these points is made in Section III of this analysis under the heading "Inaccuracies."

The most pertinent general comment, of course, is that the University has the following policies on the employment of Communists:

The Regents believe that the Communist Party gives its first loyalty to a foreign political movement and, perhaps, to a foreign government, that, by taking advantage of the idealism and inexperience of youth, and by exploiting the distress of underprivileged groups, it breeds suspicion and discord, and thus divides the democratic forces upon which the welfare of our country depends. They believe, therefore, that membership in the Communist Party is incompatible with membership in the faculty of a State University. Tolerance must not mean indifference to practices which contradict the spirit and the purposes of the way of life to which the University of California as an instrument of democracy is committed. (Adopted by The Regents in 1940)

Pursuant to this policy The Regents direct that no member of the Communist Party shall be employed by the University. (Adopted by The Regents in 1949)

The Regents of the University of California confirm and emphasize their policy designed to bar members of the Communist Party from employment by the University as members of the faculty or otherwise, as embodied in various statements and resolutions including those of October 11, 1940 and June 24, 1949, which policy is hereby reaffirmed. The Regents are gratified that the Academic Senate, both Northern and Southern Sections, has concurred in this policy by an overwhelming vote, reported on March 22, 1950. (Adopted by The Regents in 1950)

No person whose commitments or obligations to any organization, Communist or other, prejudice impartial scholarship and the free pursuit of

truth will be employed by the University. Proved members of the Communist Party, by reason of such commitments to that Party, are not acceptable as members of the faculty." (Adopted by the Academic Senate, Northern Section, in 1950)

As a faculty member I voted for the policy adopted by the Academic Senate. As Chancellor and as President I have supported both Regental and Academic Senate policies prohibiting the employment of Communists.

Whenever a responsible agency has provided proof of Communist membership, the University administration has acted promptly to uphold its prohibition against the employment of Communists.

In July of 1954, in a statement to which I shall make further reference below, University officials and Mr. Combs acting in his capacity as Counsel to the Committee, stated:

No information received by Mr. Wadman [the University Security Officer] from the Burns Committee has at any time resulted in any action by a chief local administrator on any campus of the University affecting any personnel under his jurisdiction.

I personally know of no actionable information which the University has received from the Burns Committee since that date. In 1962, in response to allegations that the Burns Committee had information regarding the possible Communist Party affiliation of University employees, I wrote to Senator Burns as follows:

If your Committee has evidence which bears upon the proper application of this [anti-Communist employment] policy, that evidence should be made available to the University administration.

I received no information in reply to this letter. I repeat my invitation of 1962.

As has always been the case, the University of California is fully prepared to enforce its prohibition against the employment of Communists. But the University, in the tradition of the American system of justice, requires substantiated evidence, not vague suspicions and unsupported allegations. Such evidence is notably missing from the current *Report*, just as it has been missing from past *Reports*.

### 3. ROLE OF UNIVERSITY SECURITY OFFICER

The *Report* states (p. 143) that the Berkeley campus "in recent years has been opposed to security measures that would at least help keep it accurately informed concerning problems of subversive infil-

tration." It further states the the University Security Officer's duties, in addition to handling Security Questionnaires for defense contracts, "consisted in maintaining proper contacts with other agencies investigating subversion in general, and in building up an efficient collection of material dealing with problems of infiltration, operation of front organizations, and all of the other pertinent information . ." The *Report* goes on to say (p. 145) that

When Kerr succeeded Sproul as president, he gave this statewide security officer so much extra work to do in the field of insurance at Berkeley, that he made it impossible for the officer to handle his full statewide security work

As a matter of record, the Security Officer's duties had been limited to matters affecting defense contracts *four* years before I became President. Mr. Combs must know this, for the document setting forth these duties was signed on July 2, 1954, by President Sproul, Vice President Corley, Committee Counsel Combs, Security Officer Wadman, and myself. It is reproduced in full as Appendix F of this Analysis.

This agreement has been the policy of the University since that date. It was not until two years after I became President that Mr. Wadman was assigned to work on insurance matters. He stated that he was not fully occupied by his defense contract duties and welcomed the additional assignment. He has never stated to me or, as far as I know, to anyone else that his insurance work in any way interfered with the meeting of his obligations under the agreement which Mr. Combs co-signed.

### III

I should like now to turn to a more detailed analysis of the contents of the *Report*. There has been no attempt to be exhaustive. That task would have been far more time-consuming than profitable. Instead, I shall proceed to list some of the major fallacies of the *Report*, with a group of substantiating examples under each of these headings

## INVESTIGATING PROCEDURES

The Committee has held no public hearings and subpoenaed no witnesses from the University, as Governor Brown pointed out in his news conference of June 22, 1965. (See Appendix G.) On June 30, 1965, Senator Burns indicated that the Committee had held two closed hearings, but had had "no opportunity to disseminate the information gained." (See Appendix B.) On p. 151 the *Report* states:

During the progress of our own investigation of the Berkeley Rebellion, covering a period of eight months, we contacted every official agency in the area that possessed reliable information concerning the demonstrations. We also conducted interviews with and received statements from university officials.

The Committee did not, however, contact one obvious source of information—the President of the University. Had it done so, a substantial number of errors might have been eliminated from the *Report*.

### INACCURACIES

These examples range from serious errors, which do grave injustices to individuals and the University, to minor mistakes which do not greatly affect the substance of the *Report* but which reveal an apparent lack of knowledge about, respect for, or even concern for the facts.

1. Summarizing the "rebellion," the *Report* says on p. 155

At least 23,000 students who were trying to get an education were subjected to brainwashing in their classrooms . . .

The *Report* does not reveal how it arrived at this astounding figure. Nor does it disclose by whom or how the "brainwashing" was accomplished. It would be a difficult task indeed to "brainwash" approximately 90% of what, in my judgment, constitutes the largest concentration of bright, alert, questioning young people in the United States.

2. On p. 60, the *Report* refers to a member of the University faculty as follows

He was Martin Kamen, the man who was an assistant to Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer at Berkeley during the research that led to the development of the atomic bomb, and who was followed by government agents and photographed passing classified information to a Soviet Vice-Consul in a San Francisco restaurant.

This sentence undoubtedly refers to a single luncheon which occurred in 1944 and which was also directly involved in libelous statements appearing in 1951 in the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Washington Times Herald*. Dr. Kamen brought suit on these stories and, following a unanimous jury verdict in his favor in the *Herald* case, received substantial libel damages from the *Herald* and a settlement from the *Tribune*. His attorney in those cases, Alexander Boskoff, has written me a letter, included in full as Appendix H, in which he says about the sentence in the *Report* concerning Dr. Kamen:

I am pleased to inform you that the statement is absolutely false, and its publication in my opinion represents wanton disregard of the truth

Incidentally, it is also untrue that Dr. Kamen served as an assistant to Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer.

Legislative privilege may afford the Committee staff a shield against a suit for libel; it ought not to afford an excuse for such treatment of the truth.

Dr. Kamen is a scientist of world renown in his field, and is presently Professor of Chemistry at the University's San Diego campus.

3. On p. 96, the *Report* states

The Regents accepted the recommendations of the Heyman Committee and rescinded suspensions of the eight students who had been disciplined for violation of the campus rules

This is false. The Heyman Committee recommended that six of the student penalties be reduced to censure and that two be limited to six-week suspensions. On the joint recommendation of Chancellor Strong and myself, The Regents suspended all eight students from September 30 to November 20, placed the two leading violators on probation for the remainder of the semester, and announced that new disciplinary proceedings would be instituted against certain organizations and individuals for actions subsequent to the violations which brought these penalties.

4. On p. 122, the *Report* refers to "Strong's ouster" and to "the hasty 'off-the-record' meeting of three Regents at Hilton Inn at the San Francisco airport, and the announcement on January 3, 1965, that Strong had been removed from his position at his own request 'for reasons of health.'"

The Special Meeting of The Regents at the Hilton Inn January 2 (not 3) was a full Board meeting called in advance in accordance with the provisions of the Board's By-Laws. It was an executive session because University personnel matters were under consideration. The Regents granted Chancellor Strong a leave of absence to recuperate from his recent illness, and appointed Dean Martin Meyerson Acting Chancellor. Chancellor Strong submitted his resignation to the Board more than two months later, at its meeting of March 13, 1965.

This same paragraph of the *Report* contains the remarkable statement that "the announcement on *January 3, 1965* . . . disturbed many of Strong's friends . . . and they persuaded him to issue a statement on *December 20, 1964*. . . ." (emphasis added)

5. The *Report* discusses (p. 128) possible disciplinary action against students involved in the "filthy speech" demonstration and states that the President "could escape personal responsibility by pass-



ing the burden to one of the many committees of the Academic Senate. He elected to follow the latter course . . .”

It was Acting Chancellor Meyerson (not the President) who referred the cases to faculty (not Academic Senate) committees, since student discipline on a campus is the Chancellor's responsibility. In any case, it is scarcely accurate to describe the pursuit of established procedures as an “escape” from personal responsibility. I might add that the committees are advisory in nature, and that the administration thus does not “escape” ultimate responsibility for decisions. The Acting Chancellor did take the responsibility—he made the decision and assessed the penalties.

6. On p. 154, the *Report* refers to “the Forbes Committee, headed by attorney Jerome C. Byrne”

The Forbes Committee, composed entirely of Regents, was headed, of course, by Regent Forbes. Mr. Byrne was not a member of the Committee; he was employed by the Forbes Committee to conduct a study of causes of unrest at the University.

7. On p. 72, the *Report* states that Miss Clara Ontell worked from September, 1950, until July, 1952, in the Chancellor's Office at Berkeley.

This is incorrect. She was employed in the office of President Robert Gordon Sproul from September 11, 1950, until July 28, 1952, when she was transferred to the Chancellor's staff. The Chancellor's Office did not even exist until July, 1952.

8. The *Report* further states (again p. 72) that Miss Ontell's “clearance was refused, however, and Miss Ontell resigned from the University on September 19, 1957.”

This is also incorrect. Her clearance was not refused but was still “in process” when Miss Ontell resigned for personal reasons; she had been married and was accompanying her husband to his new position in another part of the country.

9. On p. 72, the *Report* claims that Miss Virginia Taylor had been a member of the American Youth for Democracy and that she “perpetrated a fraud on the university by deliberately omitting such pertinent information” from her Security Questionnaire.

Mrs. Norris (she has not used her maiden name, Taylor, since her marriage 12 years ago) was never a member of the American Youth for Democracy. I might add that she has held a government clearance for access to documents classified “secret” since 1953, and this clearance is still in force and effect.

10. The *Report* states on p. 70 that Mr. Sam Kagel did not disclose that he “had been appointed as Pacific Coast Negotiator by the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, a fact which was, however, dutifully noted in the Communist newspaper on December 21, 1948.”

The "Communist newspaper" and the writers of the *Report* are equally wrong about the "fact." The fact is that Mr. Kagel was appointed Arbitrator (not "Negotiator") *jointly* by the Pacific Coast Waterfront Employers' Association and the ILWU to rule impartially on disputes arising under the provisions of their contract. It is undoubtedly his ability to be impartial that is the basis for Mr. Kagel's continued selection as arbitrator by many other employer associations, unions, and individual employers.

11. On p 138, the *Report* claims that the faculty handbook was being revised "under the supervision of Virginia Taylor Smith, in the President's Office."

There is no Virginia Taylor Smith on my staff. There is Mrs. Virginia Taylor Norris, Administrative Analyst, and there is Miss Virginia B. Smith, Assistant Vice President. Neither of these staff members was supervising the handbook revision. That work was being done by Professor Wilbur Jacobs, a member of the Santa Barbara faculty, who served as an Academic Assistant to the President in 1964-65.

12. The *Report* states on p. 139 that President Kerr persuaded The Regents to rescind the Communist speaker ban "about three months before the Berkeley Rebellion commenced."

In fact, the ban had been lifted by The Regents *one year and three months* before the fall semester of 1964 when the disturbances began. This action brought to the University of California the same "open forum" policies as already existed at all the most distinguished American universities, including Harvard and Stanford.

13. On p. 141, the *Report* states that on May 21, 1963, The Regents opened the University to Communist lecturers, that Communist Party member Albert J. Lima was the first such speaker at Berkeley, and "Then came the deluge. In came Malcolm X, William Buckley, Jr., Mark Lane, Dr. Fred Schwartz—an endless procession . . ."

It should be pointed out that the persons listed above, except for Lima, are not identified Communist Party members (among them are prominent conservative figures who might wish, rather, to be identified as "anti-Communist") and in any event would not have been excluded by the prior Communist speaker ban. There was no deluge. Incidentally, the action of The Regents was taken on June 21, 1963, not May 21.

14. The *Report* claims (p. 121) that "Chancellor Strong refused to follow the recommendations of the Heyman Committee to reinstate the eight suspended students, but they nevertheless were granted amnesty through subsequent proceedings."

This is false. By action of The Regents, all eight were suspended from September 30 to November 20 and two were continued on

probation until the end of the semester. Once assessed, these penalties remained unchanged.

15. In describing the December 7 meeting at the Greek Theater, the *Report* says (p 118) that "No invitation had been extended to, nor had any been requested by, the FSM movement."

Professor Robert Scalapino has stated publicly that FSM representatives did ask, but were refused, permission to speak

16. The *Report* states (pp 113-114) that "On the evening of Thursday, December 3, an unofficial emergency meeting of the Berkeley faculty was called . . . At this meeting a vote was taken, with 15 dissents, . . . calling for the ouster of Chancellor Strong."

No vote was taken calling for Chancellor Strong's ouster at that meeting (held at 1 P.M. Thursday afternoon, not evening) The Chairman of the Berkeley Chapter of the American Association of University Professors read a statement which included a proposal for a new chief campus officer at Berkeley, but that statement was not introduced as a motion or voted upon

17. Quoting its own 1961 *Report*, the current *Report* says on p 76 that the Kerr Directives "originally forbade the discussion of off-campus issues by students."

They contained no such prohibition at any time

18. The *Report* states on p 79 that I "declared these highly indoctrinated Castroites to be at the heart of the Berkeley Rebellion"

I made no such declaration. On October 2 I said, referring to the students who surrounded the police car in the Plaza the night before

I am sorry to say that some elements active in the demonstrations have been impressed with the tactics of Fidel Castro and Mao Tse Tung. There are very few of these, but there are some

Commenting on this statement at a student rally on October 6, Mario Savio said:

I must say both these gentlemen impress me, I'm sure all are impressed by Fidel Castro and Mao Tse Tung

19. On p. 117, the *Report* states that "Stephen Weisman (sic) was also an important member of the steering committee, and although a non-student, was affiliated with the Independent Socialist Club on the Berkeley campus."

Mr. Stephan Weissman was a graduate student in the Department of History; I have no knowledge of his political affiliations.

20. The *Report* presents a chronology of the student disturbances, beginning on p. 3. This chronology contains a number of errors

of varying degrees of importance. Some are corrected in the subsequent detailed discussion of events beginning on p. 83, others are repeated, and in other instances new errors appear.

For example, the *Report* states that on October 5 Chancellor Strong referred the discipline cases to "a faculty committee on student conduct which was commonly known as the Ira Heyman Committee." The Heyman Committee was not appointed until October 15. On October 5 the Chancellor did refer the cases to the Faculty Committee on Student Conduct, a standing committee. Professor Heyman was not a member. The cases were transferred to the newly created Heyman Committee on October 15.

While it may be argued that many of the errors in the chronology are more technical than substantive, nonetheless the presence in the report of these inaccuracies adds to the growing doubts about the degree of care and commitment to fact of those making the investigation.

In Appendix I, several additional errors found in the chronology are set forth.

21. The *Report* states on p. 7 that on December 27, I was quoted as saying that there was a hard core of demonstrators comprising as much as 40% of off-campus elements, including Communist sympathizers.

The statement was made on October 6, not December 27, and referred to the relatively small crowd of people who surrounded the police car on the night of October 1. My statement, often misquoted, follows in full:

In the estimates of experienced on-the-spot observers, the hard core group of demonstrators—those who continued as part of the demonstration through the night of October 1—contained at times as much as forty per cent off-campus elements. And within that off-campus group, there were persons identified as being sympathetic with the Communist Party and Communist causes.

22. The *Report* claims on p. 75 that "an identified member of the Communist Party," Mrs. Margaret Gelders Frantz, is now employed by the Institute of Industrial Relations.

Mrs. Frantz, who joined the Institute staff in 1958, has stated (*San Francisco News-Call Bulletin*, June 18, 1965):

I am not a member of the Communist Party and I have not been at any time during my university career. I signed the loyalty oath in good faith.

23. On p. 137 the *Report* claims that then-Professor Kenneth S. Pitzer stated that "Kerr had offered him the Chancellor's position on any of the university campuses *except* Berkeley."

I do not know to what statement of Professor Pitzer's the *Report* could possibly refer; I do know that Regents McLaughlin, Pauley and myself proposed to Professor Pitzer at a meeting in my home that he consider the Chancellorship at Berkeley or, alternatively, San Diego. He refused both in order to take another position.

24. The *Report* refers on p. 79 to Joseph P. Morray and states that his wife, Mrs. Marjorie K. Morray, "teaches in the Speech Department on the Berkeley campus."

This is incorrect. Mrs. Morray was employed in the Speech Department in the fall of 1962 and during one summer session in 1964, but has not been employed by the University since that time.

25. On p. 125, the *Report* states that "during the Kerr Administration, the Regents were persuaded to institute an innovation . . . private, off-the-record sessions with the President. . . ."

The Regents were not "persuaded" but rather some of them requested opportunities for informal discussion of general University matters not involving particular actions by the Board.

As a matter of historical record, fewer actions have been subject to treatment in executive session since I became President than before I became President.

26. Also on p. 125 appears the statement that the Board of Regents "has drifted into the habit of relying completely upon information received from academic committees, representatives of the administration, and upon personal representations from the President."

The Board has not "drifted into the habit"; it has consistently followed the normal, logical procedure of most governing boards of large organizations in relying for information primarily on its executives and staff committees. But the Board has never relied "completely" or exclusively on these sources. In recent years, for example, it has employed two different management consultant firms to do studies, and this spring a Board committee employed a non-University staff to study causes of student unrest. The Board's regular procedure, of course, also provides for the receipt of communications from any outside source, and it provides that any on-campus individual or group can communicate to The Regents via the proper channels, including the President. I know of no instance in which the President has ever refused to inform the Board of such a communication. Finally, it should be pointed out that The Regents are outstanding citizens and intelligent individuals quite capable, on their own, of acquiring and evaluating information in many areas of concern to the University.

27. On p. 66 the *Report* states that I did much work for the War Manpower Commission in San Francisco, and on p. 68 it states that I was a Consultant to the War Manpower Commission of Northern California.

I was a Senior Labor Analyst with the War Manpower Commis-

sion in Washington, D.C., for a period of about one month during the war, but I have no record to indicate, nor can I personally recall, ever working as a Consultant or in any other capacity with the War Manpower Commission in San Francisco or Northern California.

28. On p. 128 the *Report* states that I asked for a vote of confidence at The Regents' meeting of February, 1965, and failed to receive it.

I asked for no such vote at that meeting or at any other, and no such vote was taken at that meeting or at any other.

29. The *Report* refers to the administration's "tolerance of the radical student groups" (p. 67) and claims that "the administration welcomes Communist organizations, throws the portals open to Communist speakers, and exhibits an easy tolerance of Communist activists" (p. 52).

It is totally erroneous to suggest that the University "tolerates" or "welcomes" or otherwise adopts a favorable attitude toward radical organizations or speakers. The University has certain rules which permit student organizations to meet on campus and speakers to appear on campus. Groups and speakers who qualify are permitted—not tolerated or welcomed or otherwise endorsed—whether they be political, social, cultural, or recreational in nature. The University does not say a particular group *is right*; it says a group *has rights*. This is an all-important distinction.

A group also has responsibilities, including the responsibility of observing campus regulations. When SLATE, a campus group, violated the regulations in 1961, SLATE was denied on-campus status. This ruling, incidentally, was described in the 1963 Committee *Report* as "forthright action on the part of the university administration."

30. On p. 117 the *Report* states that "Mario Savio had joined the Young People's Socialist League at Berkeley in the spring of 1964—a fact which has not hitherto been disclosed, to our knowledge YPSL was a Trotskyist Communist organization. . . ."

The Young People's Socialist League is affiliated with the Socialist Party of Norman Thomas. It is strongly opposed to Communism, and is in no sense a "Trotskyist Communist" organization.

31. On p. 69 the *Report* claims that Mr. Sam Kagel, after joining the University's law faculty in 1952, listed on his biography forms some forty lectures and seminars he had given "before and after being employed by the university" but "refrained from disclosing" certain lectures given in 1942, 1945, and 1946. The implication is that Mr. Kagel carefully omitted these particular lectures from the list.

The fact is that Mr. Kagel did not list any lectures and seminars given before joining the faculty in 1952, although they included, for example, lectures given at Stanford University, the University of San Francisco, and the University of California. He listed only regular

members, they are not required, nor would most of them have kept sufficient records to enable them, to list their often numerous prior public appearances. Faculty members are encouraged to list yearly, on biographical supplement forms, public appearances they make *after* they join the staff. This Mr. Kagel did, as is attested by the mention in the *Report* of "a total of forty" such appearances. But he most certainly did not select certain items for omission; he simply did not list pre-1952 lectures at all.

### PIOUS DISCLAIMERS

The *Report* adopts the technique of presenting pious disclaimers of any intent to cast slurs or imply subversion. It would require a particularly credulous reader to believe these disclaimers in view of the accompanying statements about the individuals involved. Several examples follow

1. We wish to make it very clear that we are not inferring that Mr Kagel was guilty of any subversive affiliation, but . . . (p. 69)

The *Report* then goes on to say that Mr. Kagel taught at the "Communist School" in San Francisco (it was the California Labor School); that he "refrained from disclosing" certain facts on his University biography form (they were among a large group of occasional lectures, *none* of which was listed for that time period), that he neglected also to reveal a "fact" noted in a "Communist newspaper" (it was untrue); and that he was during the war in frequent conferences with "a member of the Communist Party from New York, and a graduate from Lenin School of Political Warfare in Moscow" (p. 70). The *Report* states eight lines later, in the midst of a long paragraph, that Mr. Kagel's frequent conferences with this individual were "natural" because the individual headed a key union of scientific workers and Mr. Kagel was then Chairman of the Northern California War Manpower Commission. Mr. Kagel, in a letter to Senator Burns (see Appendix D), has stated that he "never had any conferences or 'frequent contacts' with such a person."

If the various "facts" reported about Mr. Kagel, a distinguished Bay Area lawyer and arbitrator, were true and free from distortion, then it would seem illogical for the writers of the *Report* to fail to infer a subversive affiliation. One can only assume that they do not take seriously either the disclaimer or the "facts."

2. We do not infer that Miss Taylor was a Communist or when she filed her Personnel Security Questionnaire in 1953 she was subversive, but . . . (p. 72)

The *Report* then says that Miss Taylor attended the "Communist School" (she took a non-political ceramics class at the California Labor School seventeen years ago), attended in 1942 a conference sponsored by a component part of the Communist-controlled American Youth Congress (the group was not a part of that Congress, was personally endorsed by President Roosevelt and met at his summer residence in Campobello), and that she "perpetrated a fraud" in deliberately omitting from her Security Questionnaire her membership in a national Communist youth organization (she was, in fact, never a member).

If one is to take seriously the recited "facts," belief in the disclaimer requires considerable gullibility.

3. It should hardly be necessary for us to indicate at this point that we do not make the slightest implication of any subversive affiliation or activity on the part of Dr. Kerr by reason of anything contained in this portion of the report (p. 65).

The *Report* is replete with innuendo obviously contrary to the spirit of this disclaimer. Within two pages of the above quoted disclaimer, the *Report* states on p. 65 that "... many of Kerr's most intimate colleagues during these years were at the same time teaching at the Communist school and participating in a wide variety of pro-Communist activities" (who were the colleagues and what were the activities?—the *Report* discloses neither); on p. 66 that "radical student groups were given official university recognition" (all student organizations, regardless of political orientation, which complied with certain standard requirements were given recognition); on p. 67 that there was "reluctance to curb the activities of the most brash and defiant student rebels" (eight students were suspended and hundreds of others tried in the courts with no intervention by the University); and on p. 65 that the "university's security officer was suddenly burdened with the handling of insurance matters as well as his security duties" (an assignment welcomed by the security officer because he was not fully occupied with his security duties).

### HALF-TRUTHS AND DISTORTIONS

1. On p. 8, the *Report* states that:

As the Communist schools will play a prominent part in our description of infiltration at the Berkeley campus of the University of California, we should briefly set forth their history here by way of background.

The *Report* then gives a highly selective account of the history and associations of the school, which was called the California Labor



calls it) for the relevant period of its slight connections with University personnel. Since so much of the Report's inference of Communist influence at Berkeley is based upon this subject, I should like to give several examples of its half-truths and distortions concerning the matter.

a No attempt is made in the *Report* to explain the changing nature of the California Labor School, nor to clarify the periods of time of various persons' associations with the School. The School did come under increasing Communist influence and was eventually placed on the Attorney General's list of subversive organizations. This was not the case at an earlier period. As a matter of record, the California Labor School was accredited by the Veterans Administration for the G.I. Bill of Rights throughout 1945 and 1946, when most of these associations occurred. It was also accredited by the San Francisco Board of Education so that teachers attending courses there could receive course credit for salary increments. These facts are not cited in the *Report*. The *Report* would have been more complete had it included some of the School's sponsors as listed in its 1945 catalogues:

Jeffery Cohelan, Secretary-Treasurer, Milk Wagon Drivers Union, Local 302,  
 Sheridan Downey, U S Senator,  
 Franck Havenner, U S Congressman,  
 Daniel Koshland, Levi-Strauss Co.,  
 Sylvain J. Lazarus, Judge, Superior Court,  
 Cyril Magnin, Merchant,  
 George Miller, U S Congressman,  
 Daniel Murphy, Sheriff of San Francisco County,  
 John Shelley, State Senator,  
 Matthew Tobriner, Attorney

And, according to the same catalogue, the Educational Advisory Council included the following:

Dr. A. J. Cloud, President, San Francisco Junior College,  
 Dr. A. C. Roberts, President, San Francisco State College,  
 Curtis E. Warren, San Francisco Superintendent of Schools.

b The *Report* states that Mr. Sam Kagel taught courses at the School and claims that (p. 8)

a Communist school would hardly waste its time and money preaching anything other than Communism. No anti-Communist, or even a neutralist, would ever be allowed to teach or lecture at such a tightly-controlled institution unless he was sympathetic to the purposes for which it was created.

Mr. Kagel has stated that his lectures at the California Labor School were given in connection with his duties as Chairman of

the War Manpower Commission. He gave no lectures there after his tenure with the War Manpower Commission ended. The catalogues of the California Labor School list the following among those who gave lectures there during that same period, when it was widely supported by labor unions and G.I.-accredited.

Frank Clarvoe, Editor, *San Francisco News*,  
 Monroe Deutsch, Vice President, University of California,  
 Adrien Falk, President, San Francisco Chamber of Commerce,  
 Larry Fanning, Managing Editor, *San Francisco Chronicle*,  
 Chester McFee, San Francisco Board of Supervisors,  
 Ray Smith, San Francisco Real Estate Board,  
 L. Deming Tilton, San Francisco Director of Planning,  
 Ray Wiser, President of the California Farm Bureau Federation.

c. On pp. 8-9 the *Report* cites an institute jointly sponsored by the California Labor School and the University of California in 1946 and calls this "an astounding spectacle of a great university lending its physical facilities, its dignity and its prestige to a Communist indoctrination center which was dedicated to the subversion of our country."

The two-day Institute was sponsored by a state-wide unit of the University, University Extension. More than 200 unions named delegates to attend. The principal speaker was the Honorable Elbert D. Thomas, United States Senator from Utah. At the time of the Institute the California Labor School was accredited by the Veterans' Administration and the San Francisco Board of Education. At that time 37 American Federation of Labor unions and 34 Congress of Industrial Organizations unions were listed as School sponsors. University Extension officials had earlier listed the Institute of Industrial Relations as a co-sponsor of the two-day meeting, without consulting me as Director. Because I had already had some personal doubts about the California Labor School, I insisted that the Institute's name be withdrawn as sponsor and I declined to participate in the sessions.

d. On p. 74, the *Report* lists four members of the first Community Advisory Committee of the Institute of Industrial Relations at Berkeley, and comments that:

... the records of those just listed will give some idea of the atmosphere that pervaded the Advisory Committee and that served to continue the association between teachers in the Communist enterprises that had existed during the period of the war.

As the *Report* states, there "were, of course, other members

of the Advisory Committee for the Northern Division," but none of these other members was listed in the *Report*. This Committee consisted of 16 members and was appointed and chaired by then-President Robert Gordon Sproul. It included in its membership business, public, and labor representatives. The complete list of members was as follows:

Robert G. Sproul, President, University of California (Chairman),

Robert Ash, Secretary, Alameda Central Labor Council,

George O. Bahrs, President, San Francisco Employers' Council,

Rev. Hugh A. Donohoe, Editor, *The Monitor*,

Lincoln Fairley, Research Director, International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union,

Adrien Falk, Vice-President, S&W Fine Foods, Inc.,

Frank Foisie, President, Waterfront Employers' Association of the Pacific Coast,

Paul Heynemann, Vice-President, Eloesser, Heynemann Company,

Sam Kagel, Arbitrator, San Francisco Garment Industry,

Jack D. Maltester, Business Representative, Printing Specialties and Paper Converters' Union, Local 362,

M. S. Mason, General Chairman, Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen of America,

Arthur Miller, Regional Attorney, Social Security Board,

Paul Pinsky, Research Director, California CIO Council,

Paul Scharrenberg, Director, California State Department of Labor (*ex officio*),

Judge M. C. Sloss, Attorney (Former State Supreme Court Justice),

Dr. Lynn White, Sr., Professor, San Francisco Theological Seminary, San Anselmo,

Ray B. Wiser, President, California Farm Bureau Federation

2 On p. 137, discussing the Eli Katz case, the *Report* claims that "Just before Katz was fired, Kerr sent word that he could remain for one more year if he would agree not to go to a lawyer or to the ACLU. But news of this undercover agreement leaked out." It is true that I did propose an appointment as a Lecturer for one more year under certain conditions, but not those suggested in the *Report*. Nor was it an "undercover" agreement. At that time, Dr. Katz's case was pending before an Academic Senate committee which would take some time to reach a determination, and it was already very late in the academic year to secure an appointment elsewhere. In order to remove the imminent economic concerns which might influence either Dr. Katz's decisions about the conduct of his case or committee considerations, I proposed a temporary one-year appointment for the

following year. The proposal was not undercover or secret, it was, as a matter of fact, formally conveyed to Dr. Katz through the Chairman of the Berkeley campus chapter of the American Association of University Professors, Professor John Kelley, and duly reported at a chapter meeting. The condition referred to in the *Report* was not that he indefinitely forego consultation with a lawyer or the ACLU, but only that he not pursue an outside solution pending further internal discussion during the period ending the following October 1, less than six months from the date of the proposal and long before his appointment for the next year would conclude. In other words, it was proposed that internal procedures for resolving the case be exhausted before turning, if still necessary, to outside sources. It should also be noted that this proposal was discussed with The Regents and had their agreement by majority vote. Dr. Katz elected not to accept the proposal. I should add that Dr. Katz was not "fired," as the *Report* claims. His one-year appointment was not renewed.

3. The *Report* states on p. 139 that I proposed a "dilution" of the University's policy prohibiting the employment of Communists, by excepting foreign Communists from this policy.

The University did adopt a clarification of this policy by action of The Regents, not for the purpose of "diluting" or "toning down" the policy but to take care of a very limited, special problem: the occasional temporary employment of visiting or exchange faculty or research personnel from Communist countries. The University employs an average of perhaps four or five such persons per year. Some come for a single lecture, some for a few weeks, a semester or as long as (but no longer than) a year. Some of them come under the official State Department cultural exchange program; others are sought out because of their outstanding positions in the scientific world and their ability to contribute urgently-needed links of knowledge to scholarly research here at the University.

All such visiting scholars have been granted visas after the federal government has concluded that their visits are not prejudicial to the interests of the United States. Since they come from Communist countries, they may be at least nominal Communists; in any case, they would find it politically impossible to assert formally that they are opposed to Communism. They are by California law exempted from signing the Levering Oath.

I should add that any scholars from Communist countries being considered for *permanent* appointment at the University are *not* exempted from the policy prohibiting Communists from employment.

4. The *Report* claims on p. 138 that The Regents' formal statement of the policy prohibiting employment of Communists was included in faculty handbooks "*until 1958*" (*Report's italics*) and that

"Since 1958 this clear statement of policy has been omitted" On p. 139, the *Report* says that "it is very clear that since 1958 the provisions have been gradually toned down, the specific language has been lost . . . and that for political, ideological or other reasons, the foundation and supporting structure of the policy against hiring Communists has been loose, general, and transitory."

The Regents' statement *does* appear in the 1958 revision of the Faculty Handbook, on p. 12, under the heading "Policy Toward Subversive Organizations" It was, however, omitted from the 1963 revision of the Faculty Handbook, a fact of which I was completely unaware until it was called to my attention after the Handbook's publication. This regrettable omission was completely inadvertent; it occurred in the course of extensive reorganization of the Handbook, in which some materials were transferred to other administrative publications.

In any case, I should point out that the Faculty Handbook is not an official rule book. The University has many policies and regulations which do not appear in the Faculty Handbook, and their omission in no way means that "provisions have been gradually toned down" or "the specific language lost." University regulations are not made or unmade in this way, and such an assumption borders on the ridiculous. The prohibition against employment of Communists (except for the isolated case of visiting scholars from Communist countries discussed above) has been and is today in full force and effect. All new employees must and do sign the Levering Oath. To assert that "for political, ideological, or other reasons, the foundation and supporting structure of the policy against hiring Communists has been loose, general, and transitory" is both erroneous and casts aspersions on the integrity of The Regents and the administration.

5 On p. 52 the *Report* says that "despite the Regent's (sic) policy of not tolerating Communists as employees of the University, the administration welcomes Communist organizations, throws the portals open to Communist speakers. . . ." This is an obvious attempt to suggest a difference in approach between The Regents and the administration. The attempt is repeated elsewhere in the *Report*, for example, on p. 141 where the lifting of the Communist speaker ban is described as "the new 'free speech' policy of President Kerr." The fact is, of course, that the administration, in permitting Communists to speak on campus, does so in accordance with a policy adopted by The Regents on June 21, 1963, by a vote of 15-2. The Regents adopted this policy following discussions over a number of months and a survey of practice at leading American universities.

The *Report* also suggests that The Regents were somehow gulled by the administration into taking their actions. On p. 32, the *Report* says SLATE agitated for President Kerr "to *bring pressure* on the

Board of Regents to modify its rule . . . this *manipulation* succeeded and the rule was modified" (emphasis added). Again, on p. 52, the writers of the *Report* speculate about whether "the university administration will also succeed in *charming* the Regents into extending official campus recognition to [a new Communist] organization" (emphasis added). The use of such suggestive language displays ignorance of both the intelligence and the integrity of The Regents

6. A brief but telling use of the half-truth technique occurs on p. 67 (in the section headed "The Role of Clark Kerr"), where the *Report* refers to the 1953 trial of Joseph Weinberg for perjury in connection with alleged espionage activities at the University of California in 1939-40. The *Report* fails to disclose the rather pertinent information that the jury found Weinberg "not guilty"

7. On p. 62, referring to Professor Leon Wofsy of the Berkeley Campus faculty, the *Report* states

. . . we have nothing more than his simple statement to the effect that he became disenchanted with Communism and left the movement in 1956.

It can equally be said that the *Report* presents no single shred of evidence to suggest that Professor Wofsy has had any connections with the Communist Party since 1956. Professor Wofsy has signed the Levering Oath, and he has publicly stated that he is no longer a member of the Communist Party (see Appendix E). I should like to point out that Professor Wofsy's recommended appointment was reviewed by Dean William B. Fretter and Chancellor Strong, who determined that the appointment was consistent with University policies including the policy prohibiting the employment of Communists

8. On pp. 134-135 the *Report* describes a new educational program developed by Professor Joseph Tussman and concludes that "Apparently the suggestion . . . met with approval by certain elements of the faculty and administration. . . ." It is not clear what "certain elements" on the campus was meant to suggest. The program was approved by those faculty and administrative bodies which have been assigned the responsibility for reviewing new program proposals of this nature

### TELESCOPING OF TIME

The *Report* has made ample use of a technique of telescoping time so that widely separated events may appear to have some close connection and activities that occurred long ago may appear to have current relevance. As State Senator Stephen Teale so aptly observed:

The impression I got was that simply by association, interspersing para-

graphs about recent troubles at the University with totally unrelated activities of the last 20 years, we are trying to imply that all recent campus action was a Communist plot (See Appendix A.)

Several specific examples of this technique follow

1. On p. 16 the *Report* discusses the "united front" (presumably because of its alleged use by the Free Speech Movement), and this leads to a two-page discussion of "another great united front movement"—the San Francisco General Strike of 1934, some 30 years ago. In similar fashion the *Report* works in discussions of student activities at the College of the City of New York in the 1930's, the murder of an anti-Communist seaman by alleged Communists in Oakland in the 1930's, the alleged organization of a "Communist unit" of Berkeley faculty members known as "Unit Five" in the early 1930's, entrenchment of Communists throughout the public school system of Venezuela in 1939, the attempt of the Black Liberation Front to blow up the Statue of Liberty in 1964, the San Joaquin Cotton Strike of 1933, the student demonstration against the House Committee on Un-American Activities in 1960, the Argentine movement beginning in 1918 for student participation in university administration, the riots following the air-borne rescue operations in the Congo, etc.

2. On p. 53, the *Report* states

The first phase of events leading to the Berkeley Rebellion falls now into its proper place. We have seen how the Communist Party . . . established its faculty and student units at the Berkeley campus of the University of California and steadily built a strong base of operations in the Bay Area of California and particularly at the principal campus of the nation's largest university.

This language implies the present existence of Communist faculty units at Berkeley. But how have we "seen" this? The "evidence" appears on p. 20, where the *Report* states that "a campus unit of university faculty members existed at the University of California since the early 1930's." A careful reader may discover here a footnote, indicating that the authority for this statement is testimony quoted in the 1943 *Report* of the Committee. No other evidence of the continued existence of this unit is offered. The only faculty member named in connection with this unit is Professor Haakon Chevalier, who has not been a member of the Berkeley faculty for the past nineteen years.

3. On p. 73, the *Report* describes the opening announcement of the Institute of Industrial Relations, issued in 1946. The same paragraph continues with the allegation that when the "Communist School" ceased its activity it turned over all its catalogues and vital papers to the Institute's library, a "fact" the *Report* says is "interesting

to note." The apparent implication is that the Institute was taking over the activities of the "Communist School." What the *Report* does not disclose is that the School's termination and the transfer of papers and catalogues was not made until 1957, eleven years later. And I should note, in passing, that the item is inaccurate as well as misleading: the papers went not to the Institute but to the General Library on the Berkeley campus, where they are available, like other Library materials, for research purposes. The Regents accepted the gift of these materials because of their potential use as historical documents.

4. On p. 69, the *Report* states that Mr. Sam Kagel was in 1929 a reader for Professor Charles A. Gulick, Jr., "who many years afterward became a faculty sponsor for SLATE." The interval was, in fact, approximately *thirty* years. I assume the writers of the *Report* somehow found this remarkably attenuated connection significant, or they would not have pointed it out. I am at a loss to know whether they meant to imply that Mr. Kagel had influenced Professor Gulick, or *vice versa*. In any event, it might be relevant to quote, from the booklet entitled *Information for Student Organizations, 1964-65*, a section under the heading, "The Role of Advisors":

Attention is directed to the fact that the advisor [sponsor] need not necessarily hold the views of the organization nor be in sympathy with its objective

5. On p. 133, the *Report* succeeds not only in telescoping time but finally in turning it inside out. It refers to the term "Free University" and states that the term "probably had its origin on the Berkeley campus because of a situation that arose at Adelphi College in New York" in February, 1965. Curiously enough, the *Report* carries on that same page a quotation from a SLATE leader in May, 1963, which includes the words ". . . we've lost the free university." The term "Free University" was used during the Sproul Hall sit-in in December, 1964, and was featured in a Free Speech Movement press release dated December 7, 1964, which quoted a Steering Committee member as saying, ". . . let's go to those classes in the 'Free University'. . . ." This was two months *prior* to the Adelphi College incident which the *Report* suggested was the origin of the term.

### GUILT BY JUXTAPOSITION

There are many instances in which the *Report* uses a technique which might well be called "guilt by juxtaposition." Alleged facts about Communist activities are presented in such a context and in such proximity with other facts about individuals that a connection with Communism is suggested. The technique is not quite the same



as "guilt by association" because there is often no direct claim of association with any specific individuals. Some examples of this technique follow.

1. Beginning on p. 7, the *Report* presents a section entitled "History of Communism at Berkeley." It contains only several scattered paragraphs about Berkeley, but says that, "in order to have the proper perspective before considering the Berkeley rebellion in detail, one must first realize the true nature of the Communist school . . ." The section lists and describes "the more important faculty members of the various Communist education institutions in San Francisco . . ." It gives no indication of their tenure, nor whether they taught there when the California Labor School was G.I.-accredited. Of the eighteen persons discussed, sixteen have no apparent connection whatsoever with the Berkeley student disturbances. It should be noted, incidentally, that the "Communist school" (the California Labor School) closed its doors in 1957, seven years prior to the Berkeley student disturbances.

2. On p. 67, the *Report* states that I was appointed to a committee to investigate the San Joaquin Cotton Strike of 1933 and then proceeds with a lengthy description of the Communist character of the union involved. No claim is made that I associated with or favored the union. On the other hand, no parallel description is given of the growers involved in the dispute, nor is there any accurate description of the vigilante murders of strikers at Pixley and Arvin. The description of the union is irrelevant to the substance of the *Report* and the only reason I can see for its inclusion is to suggest some early connections of my name with Communist activities. It would be just as logical to connect me with the growers or with vigilante activities. I might add that I was never a member of the committee. I was, in fact, a very young field investigator for the committee. The committee was chaired by Archbishop Hanna of the Catholic Church, and the other members were President Tully Knowles of the College of the Pacific and Professor Ira B. Cross of Berkeley. The committee was appointed by President Roosevelt and Governor Rolph. I considered the union to be Communist dominated, although there were competitive elements at work, particularly religious leaders among the migrants from the Southwest. I thought the Communists sought to exploit the strikers, not to represent their interests effectively.

3. Again, on p. 66, the *Report* cites my service as a field advisor for the State Relief Administration in 1934 and 1935. The following sentence says:

This was the period when the Communist infiltration of the State Relief Administration was gathering considerable momentum.

The Report makes no attempt to claim that I was associated with any Communists there, but goes on in the same paragraph about subsequent hearings beginning in 1941 which later disclosed alleged Communist activities within two other organizations. These hearings and organizations are totally irrelevant and unconnected with the biographical sketch about me. The next paragraph then resumes my biography. The casual reader, of course, is easily left with the impression that I must have had some connection with these alleged Communist activities. I was actually working with the self-help co-operatives which were composed of remarkably self-reliant people who tried to make a living by working for each other although none had regular jobs

4. The *Report* cites my service with several war agencies, and then states (p. 67) that:

No one can seriously doubt that there were swarms of Communists throughout our wartime agencies.

It goes on to say (again p. 67) that there were "tough, experienced Communists" in many federal agencies "during this critical period" and refers to a list of many of them contained in the 1959 *Report*. An examination of that list indicates several interesting facts

a. The lengthy list contains no name associated with me or with the current University of California scene.

b. It covers not only federal war agencies but the armed forces, and many pre-war agencies.

c. It includes, by definition in the *Report*, not only identified Communists and Soviet agents but also persons who have invoked the fifth amendment when questioned about their alleged Communist activities.

In other words, the list was not necessarily limited to "tough, experienced Communists," it certainly was not limited to war agency personnel, and, most significantly for our purposes here, it had absolutely nothing to do with my biography or with the University of California.

Those of us who aided the war effort by serving in the federal agencies and the armed forces would have been appalled had it been suggested, as it now is in the *Report*, that our reputations would suffer from serving these agencies.

# ESCOBEDO v. ILLINOIS



## CERTIORARI TO THE SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

No 615 Argued April 29, 1964—Decided June 22, 1964

Petitioner, a 22-year-old of Mexican extraction, was arrested with his sister and taken to police headquarters for interrogation in connection with the fatal shooting, about 11 days before, of his brother-in-law. He had been arrested shortly after the shooting, but had made no statement, and was released after his lawyer obtained a writ of habeas corpus from a state court. Petitioner made several requests to see his lawyer, who, though present in the building, and despite persistent efforts, was refused access to his client. Petitioner was not advised by the police of his right to remain silent and, after persistent questioning by the police, made a damaging statement to an Assistant State's Attorney which was admitted at the trial. Convicted of murder, he appealed to the State Supreme Court, which affirmed the conviction. *Held* Under the circumstances of this case, where a police investigation is no longer a general inquiry into an unsolved crime but has begun to focus on a particular suspect in police custody who has been refused an opportunity to consult with his counsel and who has not been warned of his constitutional right to keep silent, the accused has been denied the assistance of counsel in violation of the Sixth and Fourteenth Amendments, and no statement extracted by the police during the interrogation may be used against him at a trial. *Crooker v California*, 357 U. S. 433, and *Cicenia v Lagay*, 357

October Term, 1963 Decision of the United States Supreme Court

Barry L. Kroll argued the cause for petitioner. With him on the brief was Donald M. Haskell.

James R. Thompson argued the cause for respondent. With him on the brief were Daniel P. Ward and Elmer C. Kissane.

Bernard Weissberg argued the cause for the American Civil Liberties Union, as *amicus curiae*, urging reversal. With him on the brief was Walter T. Fisher.

U. S. 504, distinguished, and to the extent that they may be inconsistent with the instant case, they are not controlling Pp 479-492.  
28 Ill. 2d 41, 190 N E 2d 825, reversed and remanded

OPINION OF THE COURT.

MR. JUSTICE GOLDBERG delivered the opinion of the Court.

The critical question in this case is whether, under the circumstances, the refusal by the police to honor petitioner's request to consult with his lawyer during the course of an interrogation constitutes a denial of "the Assistance of Counsel" in violation of the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution as "made obligatory upon the States by the Fourteenth Amendment," *Gideon v. Wainwright*, 372 U. S. 335, 342, and thereby renders inadmissible in a state criminal trial any incriminating statement elicited by the police during the interrogation.

On the night of January 19, 1960, petitioner's brother-in-law was fatally shot. In the early hours of the next morning, at 2.30 a. m., petitioner was arrested without a warrant and interrogated. Petitioner made no statement to the police and was released at 5 that afternoon pursuant to a state court writ of habeas corpus obtained by Mr. Warren Wolfson, a lawyer who had been retained by petitioner.

On January 30, Benedict DiGerlando, who was then in police custody and who was later indicted for the murder along with petitioner, told the police that petitioner had fired the fatal shots. Between 8 and 9 that evening, petitioner and his sister, the widow of the deceased, were arrested and taken to police headquarters. En route to the police station, the police "had handcuffed the defendant behind his back," and "one of the arresting officers told defendant that DiGerlando had named him as the one who shot" the deceased. Petitioner testified, without contradiction, that the "detectives said they had us pretty well, up pretty tight, and we might as well admit to this crime," and that he replied, "I am sorry but I would like to have advice from my lawyer." A police officer testified that although petitioner was not formally charged "he was in custody" and "couldn't walk out the door."

Shortly after petitioner reached police headquarters, his retained lawyer arrived. The lawyer described the ensuing events in the following terms:

On that day I received a phone call [from "the mother of another defendant"] and pursuant to that phone call I went to the Detective Bureau at 11th and State. The first person I talked to was the Sergeant on duty at the Bureau Desk, Sergeant Pidgeon. I asked Sergeant Pidgeon for permission to speak to my client, Danny Escobedo. . . . Sergeant Pidgeon made a call to the Bureau lockup and informed me that the boy had been taken from the lockup to the Homicide Bureau. This was between 9:30 and 10:00 in the evening. Before I went anywhere, he called the Homicide

Bureau and told them there was an attorney waiting to see Escobedo. He told me I could not see him. Then I went upstairs to the Homicide Bureau. There were several Homicide Detectives around and I talked to them. I identified myself as Escobedo's attorney and asked permission to see him. They said I could not . . . The police officer told me to see Chief Flynn who was on duty. I identified myself to Chief Flynn and asked permission to see my client. He said I could not. . . . I think it was approximately 11 00 o'clock. He said I couldn't see him because they hadn't completed questioning. . . . [F]or a second or two I spotted him in an office in the Homicide Bureau. The door was open and I could see through the office. . . . I waved to him and he waved back and then the door was closed, by one of the officers at Homicide.<sup>1</sup> There were four or five officers milling around the Homicide Detail that night. As to whether I talked to Captain Flynn any later that day, I waited around for another hour or two and went back again and renewed by [sic] request to see my client. He again told me I could not. . . . I filed an official complaint with Commissioner Phelan of the Chicago Police Department. I had a conversation with every police officer I could find. I was told at Homicide that I couldn't see him and I would have to get a writ of habeas corpus. I left the Homicide Bureau and [went] from the Detective Bureau at 11th and State at approximately 1 00 A.M. [Sunday morning] I had no opportunity to talk to my client that night. I quoted to Captain Flynn the Section of the Criminal Code which allows an attorney the right to see his client.<sup>2</sup>

Petitioner testified that during the course of the interrogation he repeatedly asked to speak to his lawyer and that the police said that his lawyer "didn't want to see" him. The testimony of the police officers confirmed these accounts in substantial detail.

Notwithstanding repeated requests by each, petitioner and his retained lawyer were afforded no opportunity to consult during the course of the entire interrogation. At one point, as previously noted, petitioner and his attorney came into each other's view for a few moments but the attorney was quickly ushered away. Petitioner testified "that he heard a detective telling the attorney the latter would not be allowed to talk to [him] 'until they were done'" and that he heard the attorney being refused permission to remain in the adjoining room. A police officer testified that he had told the lawyer that he could not see petitioner until "we were through interrogating" him.

There is testimony by the police that during the interrogation,

<sup>1</sup> Petitioner testified that this ambiguous gesture "could have meant most anything," but that he "took it upon [his] own to think that [the lawyer was telling him] not to say anything," and that the lawyer "wanted to talk" to him.

<sup>2</sup> The statute then in effect provided in pertinent part that. "All public officers . . . having the custody of any person . . . restrained of his liberty for any alleged cause whatever, shall, except in cases of imminent danger of escape, admit any practicing attorney . . . whom such person . . . may desire to see or consult . . ." Ill. Rev. Stat. (1959), c. 38, § 477. Repealed as of Jan. 1, 1964, by Act approved Aug. 14, 1963, H. B. No. 851.

petitioner, a 22-year-old of Mexican extraction with no record of previous experience with the police, "was handcuffed"<sup>3</sup> in a standing position and that he "was nervous, he had circles under his eyes and he was upset" and was "agitated" because "he had not slept well in over a week."

It is undisputed that during the course of the interrogation Officer Montejano, who "grew up" in petitioner's neighborhood, who knew his family, and who uses "Spanish language in [his] police work," conferred alone with petitioner "for about a quarter of an hour. ." Petitioner testified that the officer said to him "in Spanish that my sister and I could go home if I pinned it on Benedict DiGerlando," that "he would see to it that we would go home and be held only as witnesses, if anything, if we had made a statement against DiGerlando . . . , that we would be able to go home that night" Petitioner testified that he made the statement in issue because of this assurance. Officer Montejano denied offering any such assurance

A police officer testified that during the interrogation the following occurred:

I informed him of what DiGerlando told me and when I did, he told me that DiGerlando was [living] and I said, "Would you care to tell DiGerlando that?" and he said, "Yes, I will." So, I brought . . . Escobedo in and he confronted DiGerlando and he told him that he was lying and said, "I didn't shoot Manuel, you did it."

In this way, petitioner, for the first time, admitted to some knowledge of the crime. After that he made additional statements further implicating himself in the murder plot. At this point an Assistant State's Attorney, Theodore J. Cooper, was summoned "to take" a statement. Mr. Cooper, an experienced lawyer who was assigned to the Homicide Division to take "statements from some defendants and some prisoners that they had in custody," "took" petitioner's statement by asking carefully framed questions apparently designed to assure the admissibility into evidence of the resulting answers. Mr. Cooper testified that he did not advise petitioner of his constitutional rights, and it is undisputed that no one during the course of the interrogation so advised him.

Petitioner moved both before and during trial to suppress the incriminating statement, but the motions were denied. Petitioner was convicted of murder and he appealed the conviction.

The Supreme Court of Illinois, in its original opinion of February 1, 1963, held the statement inadmissible and reversed the conviction. The court said:

<sup>3</sup> The trial judge justified the handcuffing on the ground that it "is ordinary police procedure."

[I]t seems manifest to us, from the undisputed evidence and the circumstances surrounding defendant at the time of his statement and shortly prior thereto, that the defendant understood he would be permitted to go home if he gave the statement and would be granted an immunity from prosecution.

Compare *Lynum v. Illinois*, 372 U. S. 528.

The State petitioned for, and the court granted, rehearing. The court then affirmed the conviction. It said “[T]he officer denied making the promise and the trier of fact believed him. We find no reason for disturbing the trial court’s finding that the confession was voluntary.”<sup>4</sup> 28 Ill. 2d 41, 45–46, 190 N. E. 2d 825, 827. The court also held, on the authority of this Court’s decisions in *Crooker v. California*, 357 U. S. 433, and *Cicenia v. Lagay*, 357 U. S. 504, that the confession was admissible even though “it was obtained after he had requested the assistance of counsel, which request was denied.” 28 Ill. 2d, at 46, 190 N. E. 2d, at 827. We granted a writ of certiorari to consider whether the petitioner’s statement was constitutionally admissible at his trial. 375 U. S. 902. We conclude, for the reasons stated below, that it was not and, accordingly, we reverse the judgment of conviction.

In *Massiah v. United States*, 377 U. S. 201, this Court observed that

a Constitution which guarantees a defendant the aid of counsel at . . . trial could surely vouchsafe no less to an indicted defendant under interrogation by the police in a completely extrajudicial proceeding. Anything less . . . might deny a defendant “effective representation by counsel at the only stage when legal aid and advice would help him” *Id.*, at 204, quoting DOUGLAS, J., concurring in *Spano v. New York*, 360 U. S. 315, 326.

The interrogation here was conducted before petitioner was formally indicted. But in the context of this case, that fact should make no difference. When petitioner requested, and was denied, an opportunity to consult with his lawyer, the investigation had ceased to be a general investigation of “an unsolved crime.” *Spano v. New*

<sup>4</sup> Compare *Haynes v. Washington*, 373 U. S. 503, 515 (decided on the same day as the decision of the Illinois Supreme Court here), where we said

“Our conclusion is in no way foreclosed, as the State contends, by the fact that the state trial judge or the jury may have reached a different result on this issue.

“It is well settled that the duty of constitutional adjudication resting upon this Court requires that the question whether the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment has been violated by admission into evidence of a coerced confession be the subject of an *independent* determination here, see, e. g., *Ashcraft v. Tennessee*, 322 U. S. 143, 147–148, ‘we cannot escape the responsibility of making our own examination of the record,’ *Spano v. New York*, 360 U. S. 415, 316.” (Emphasis in original.)

*York*, 360 U. S. 315, 327 (STEWART, J., concurring). Petitioner had become the accused, and the purpose of the interrogation was to "get him" to confess his guilt despite his constitutional right not to do so. At the time of his arrest and throughout the course of the interrogation, the police told petitioner that they had convincing evidence that he had fired the fatal shots. Without informing him of his absolute right to remain silent in the face of this accusation, the police urged him to make a statement.<sup>5</sup> As this Court observed many years ago:

It cannot be doubted that, placed in the position in which the accused was when the statement was made to him that the other suspected person had charged him with crime, the result was to produce upon his mind the fear that if he remained silent it would be considered an admission of guilt, and therefore render certain his being committed for trial as the guilty person, and it cannot be conceived that the converse impression would not also have naturally arisen, that by denying there was hope of removing the suspicion from himself. *Brann v. United States*, 168 U. S. 532, 562.

Petitioner, a layman, was undoubtedly unaware that under Illinois law an admission of "mere" complicity in the murder plot was legally as damaging as an admission of firing of the fatal shots. *Illinois v. Escobedo*, 28 Ill. 2d 41, 190 N. E. 2d 825. The "guiding hand of counsel" was essential to advise petitioner of his rights in this delicate situation. *Porwell v. Alabama*, 287 U. S. 45, 69. This was the "stage when legal aid and advice" were most critical to petitioner. *Massiah v. United States*, *supra*, at 204. It was a stage surely as critical as was the arraignment in *Hamilton v. Alabama*, 368 U. S. 52, and the preliminary hearing in *White v. Maryland*, 373 U. S. 59. What happened at this interrogation could certainly "affect the whole trial," *Hamilton v. Alabama*, *supra*, at 54, since rights "may be as irretrievably lost, if not then and there asserted, as they are when an accused represented by counsel waives a right for strategic purposes" *Ibid*. It would exalt form over substance to make the right to counsel, under these circumstances, depend on whether at the time of the interrogation, the authorities had secured a formal indictment. Petitioner had, for all practical purposes, already been charged with murder.

The New York Court of Appeals, whose decisions this Court cited with approval in *Massiah*, 377 U. S. 201, at 205, has recently recognized that, under circumstances such as those here, no meaningful distinction can be drawn between interrogation of an accused before and after formal indictment. In *People v. Donovan*, 13 N. Y. 2d,

<sup>5</sup> Although there is testimony in the record that petitioner and his lawyer had previously discussed what petitioner should do in the event of interrogation, there is no evidence that they discussed what petitioner should, or could, do in the face of a false accusation that he had fired the fatal bullets.



148, 193 N. E. 2d 628, that court, in an opinion by Judge Fuld, held that a "confession taken from a defendant, during a period of detention [prior to indictment], after his attorney had requested and been denied access to him" could not be used against him in a criminal trial.<sup>6</sup> *Id.*, at 151, 193 N. E. 2d, at 629. The court observed that it "would be highly incongruous if our system of justice permitted the district attorney, the lawyer representing the State, to extract a confession from the accused while his own lawyer, seeking to speak with him, was kept from him by the police." *Id.*, at 152, 193 N. E. 2d, at 629.<sup>7</sup>

In *Gideon v. Wainwright*, 372 U. S. 335, we held that every person accused of a crime, whether state or federal, is entitled to a lawyer at trial.<sup>8</sup> The rule sought by the State, here, however, would make the trial no more than an appeal from the interrogation, and the "right to use counsel at the formal trial [would be] a very hollow thing [if], for all practical purposes, the conviction is already assured by pretrial examination." *In re Groban*, 352 U. S. 330, 344 (BLACK, J., dissenting).<sup>9</sup> "One can imagine a cynical prosecutor saying 'Let them have the most illustrious counsel, now. They can't escape the noose. There is nothing that counsel can do for them at the trial.'" *Ex parte Sullivan*, 107 F. Supp. 514, 517-518.

It is argued that if the right to counsel is afforded prior to indictment, the number of confessions obtained by the police will diminish significantly, because most confessions are obtained during the period between arrest and indictment,<sup>10</sup> and "any lawyer worth his salt will tell the suspect in no uncertain terms to make no statement to police

<sup>6</sup> The English Judges' Rules also recognize that a functional rather than a formal test must be applied and that, under circumstances such as those here, no special significance should be attached to formal indictment. The applicable Rule does not permit the police to question an accused, except in certain extremely limited situations not relevant here, at any time after the defendant "has been charged or informed that he may be prosecuted." [1964] Crim. L. Rev. 166-170 (emphasis supplied). Although voluntary statements obtained in violation of these rules are not automatically excluded from evidence the judge may, in the exercise of his discretion, exclude them. "Recent cases suggest that perhaps the judges have been tightening up [and almost] inevitably, the effect of the new Rules will be to stimulate this tendency." *Id.*, at 182.

<sup>7</sup> Canon 9 of the American Bar Association's Canon of Professional Ethics provides that

"A lawyer should not in any way communicate upon the subject of controversy with a party represented by counsel, much less should he undertake to negotiate or compromise the matter with him, but should deal only with his counsel. It is incumbent upon the lawyer most particularly to avoid everything that may tend to mislead a party not represented by counsel, and he should not undertake to advise him as to the law." See *Broeder, Wong Sun v. United States*, A Study in Faith and Hope, 42 Neb. L. Rev. 483, 599-604.

<sup>8</sup> Twenty-two States, including Illinois, urged us so to hold.

<sup>9</sup> The Soviet criminal code does not permit a lawyer to be present during the investigation. The Soviet trial has thus been aptly described as "an appeal from the pretrial investigation." Feifer, *Justice in Moscow* (1964), 86.

<sup>10</sup> See Barrett, *Police Practices and the Law—From Arrest to Release or Charge*, 50 Cal. L. Rev. 11, 43 (1962).

under any circumstances." *Watts v. Indiana*, 338 U. S. 49, 59 (Jackson, J., concurring in part and dissenting in part). This argument, of course, cuts two ways. The fact that many confessions are obtained during this period points up its critical nature as a "stage when legal aid and advice" are surely needed. *Massiah v. United States*, *supra*, at 204; *Hamilton v. Alabama*, *supra*; *White v. Maryland*, *supra*. The right to counsel would indeed be hollow if it began at a period when few confessions were obtained. There is necessarily a direct relationship between the importance of a stage to the police in their quest for a confession and the criticalness of that stage to the accused in his need for legal advice. Our Constitution, unlike some others, strikes the balance in favor of the right of the accused to be advised by his lawyer of his privilege against self-discrimination. See Note, 73 Yale L. J. 1000, 1048-1051 (1964).

We have learned the lesson of history, ancient and modern, that a system of criminal law enforcement which comes to depend on the "confession" will, in the long run, be less reliable<sup>11</sup> and more subject to abuses<sup>12</sup> than a system which depends on extrinsic evidence independently secured through skillful investigation. As Dean Wigmore so wisely said:

*[A]ny system of administration which permits the prosecution to trust habitually to compulsory self-disclosure as a source of proof must itself suffer morally thereby.* The inclination develops to rely mainly upon such evidence, and to be satisfied with an incomplete investigation of the other sources. The exercise of the power to extract answers begets a forgetfulness of the just limitations of that power. The simple and peaceful process of questioning breeds a readiness to resort to bullying and to physical force and torture. If there is a right to an answer, there soon seems to be a right to the expected answer,—that is, to a confession of guilt. Thus the legitimate use grows into the unjust abuse, ultimately, the innocent are jeopardized by the encroachments of a bad system. Such seems to have been the course of experience in those legal systems where the privilege was not recognized. 8 Wigmore, *Evidence* (3d ed. 1940), 309. (Emphasis in original.)

This Court also has recognized that "history amply shows that confessions have often been extorted to save law enforcement officials

<sup>11</sup> See Committee Print, Subcommittee to Investigate Administration of the Internal Security Act, Senate Committee on the Judiciary, 85th Cong., 1st Sess., reporting and analyzing the proceedings at the XXth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, February 25, 1956, exposing the false confessions obtained during the Stalin purges of the 1930's. See also *Miller v. United States*, 320 F. 2d 767, 772-773 (opinion of Chief Judge Bazelon), *Lifton, Though Reform and the Psychology of Totalism* (1961); Rogge, *Why Men Confess* (1959); Schein, *Coercive Persuasion* (1961).

<sup>12</sup> See Stephen, *History of the Criminal Law*, quoted in 8 Wigmore, *Evidence* (3d ed. 1940), 312; Report and Recommendations of the Commissioners' Committee on Police Arrests for Investigation, District of Columbia (1962).

the trouble and effort of obtaining valid and independent evidence. . . ." *Hayns v. Washington*, 373 U. S. 503, 519.

We have also learned the companion lesson of history that no system of criminal justice can, or should, survive if it comes to depend for its continued effectiveness on the citizens' abdication through unawareness of their constitutional rights. No system worth preserving should have to *fear* that if an accused is permitted to consult with a lawyer, he will become aware of, and exercise, these rights.<sup>13</sup> If the exercise of constitutional rights will thwart the effectiveness of a system of law enforcement, then there is something very wrong with that system.<sup>14</sup>

We hold, therefore, that where, as here, the investigation is no longer a general inquiry into an unsolved crime but has begun to focus on a particular suspect, the suspect has been taken into police custody, the police carry out a process of interrogations that lends itself to eliciting incriminating statements, the suspect has requested and been denied an opportunity to consult with his lawyer, and the police have not effectively warned him of his absolute constitutional right to remain silent, the accused has been denied "the Assistance of Counsel" in violation of the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution as "made obligatory upon the States by the Fourteenth Amendment," *Gideon v. Wainwright*, 372 U. S., at 342, and that no statement elicited by the police during the interrogation may be used against him at a criminal trial.

*Crooker v. California*, 357 U. S. 433, does not compel a contrary result. In that case the Court merely rejected the absolute rule sought by petitioner, that "every state denial of a request to contact counsel [is] an infringement of the constitutional right *without regard to the circumstances of the case*" *Id.*, at 440 (Emphasis in original.) In its place, the following rule was announced

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Report of Attorney General's Committee on Poverty and the Administration of Federal Criminal Justice (1963), 10-11 "The survival of our system of criminal justice and the values which it advances depends upon a constant, searching, and creative questioning of official decisions and assertions of authority at all stages of the process . . . Persons [denied access to counsel] are incapable of providing the challenges that are indispensable to satisfactory operation of the system. The loss to the interests of accused individuals, occasioned by these failures, are great and apparent. It is also clear that a situation in which persons are required to contest a serious accusation but are denied access to the tools of contest is offensive to fairness and equity. Beyond these considerations, however, is the fact that [this situation is] detrimental to the proper functioning of the system of justice and that the loss in vitality of the adversary system, thereby occasioned, significantly endangers the basic interests of a free community."

<sup>14</sup> The accused may, of course, intelligently and knowingly waive his privilege against self-incrimination and his right to counsel either at a pretrial stage or at the trial. See *Johnson v. Zerbst*, 304 U. S. 458. But no knowing and intelligent waiver of any constitutional right can be said to have occurred under the circumstances of this case.

[S]tate refusal of a request to engage counsel violates due process not only if the accused is deprived of counsel at trial on the merits, . . . *but also if he is deprived of counsel for any part of the pretrial proceedings*, provided that he is so prejudiced thereby as to infect his subsequent trial with an absence of "that fundamental fairness essential to the very concept of justice. . . ." The latter determination necessarily depends upon all the circumstances of the case. 357 U. S., at 439-440. (Emphasis added.)

The Court, applying "these principles" to "the sum total of the circumstances [there] during the time petitioner was without counsel," *id.*, at 440, concluded that he had not been fundamentally prejudiced by the denial of his request for counsel. Among the critical circumstances which distinguish that case from this one are that the petitioner there, but not here, was explicitly advised by the police of his constitutional right to remain silent and not to "say anything" in response to the questions, *id.*, at 437, and that petitioner there, but not here, was a well-educated man who had studied criminal law while attend-law school for a year. The Court's opinion in *Cicenia v. Lagay*, 357 U. S. 504, decided the same day, merely said that the "contention that petitioner had a constitutional right to confer with counsel is disposed of by *Crooker v. California* . . . ." That case adds nothing, therefore, to *Crooker*. In any event, to the extent that *Cicenia* or *Crooker* may be inconsistent with the principles announced today, they are not to be regarded as controlling.<sup>15</sup>

Nothing we have said today affects the powers of the police to investigate "an unsolved crime," *Spano v. New York*, 360 U. S. 315, 327 (STEWART, J., concurring), by gathering information from witnesses and by other "proper investigative efforts." *Haynes v. Washington*, 373 U. S. 503, 519. We hold only that when the process shifts from investigatory to accusatory—when its focus is on the accused and its purpose is to elicit a confession—our adversary system begins to operate, and, under the circumstances here, the accused must be permitted to consult with his lawyer.

The judgment of the Illinois Supreme Court is reversed and the case remanded for proceedings not inconsistent with this opinion.

*Reversed and remanded.*

MR. JUSTICE HARLAN, dissenting.

I would affirm the judgment of the Supreme Court of Illinois on the basis of *Cicenia v. Lagay*, 357 U. S. 504, decided by this Court only six years ago. Like my Brother WHITE, *post*, p. 495, I think the rule announced today is most ill-conceived and that it seriously and

<sup>15</sup> The authority of *Cicenia v. Lagay*, 357 U. S. 504, and *Crooker v. California*, 357 U. S. 433, was weakened by the subsequent decisions of this Court in *Hamilton v. Alabama*, 368 U. S. 52, *White v. Maryland*, 373 U. S. 59, and *Massiah v. United States*, 377 U. S. 201 (as the dissenting opinion in the last-cited case recognized).

unjustifiably fetters perfectly legitimate methods of criminal law enforcement.

MR. JUSTICE STEWART, dissenting.

I think this case is directly controlled by *Cicenia v. Lagay*, 357 U.S. 504, and I would therefore affirm the judgment.

*Massiah v. United States*, 377 U. S. 201, is not in point here. In that case a federal grand jury had indicted Massiah. He had retained a lawyer and entered a formal plea of not guilty. Under our system of federal justice an indictment and arraignment are followed by a trial, at which the Sixth Amendment guarantees the defendant the assistance of counsel.\* But Massiah was released on bail, and thereafter agents of the Federal Government deliberately elicited incriminating statements from him in the absence of his lawyer. We held that the use of these statements against him at his trial denied him the basic protections of the Sixth Amendment guarantee. Putting to one side the fact that the case now before us is not a federal case, the vital fact remains that this case does not involve the deliberate interrogation of a defendant after the initiation of judicial proceedings against him. The Court disregards this basic difference between the present case and Massiah's, with the bland assertion that "that fact should make no difference." *Ante*, p. 485.

It is "that fact," I submit, which makes all the difference. Under our system of criminal justice the institution of formal, meaningful judicial proceedings, by way of indictment, information, or arraignment, marks the point at which a criminal investigation has ended and adversary proceedings have commenced. It is at this point that the constitutional guarantees attach which pertain to a criminal trial. Among those guarantees are the right to a speedy trial, the right of confrontation, and the right to trial by jury. Another is the guarantee of the assistance of counsel. *Gideon v. Wainwright*, 372 U. S. 335; *Hamilton v. Alabama*, 368 U. S. 52; *White v. Maryland*, 373 U. S. 59.

The confession which the Court today holds inadmissible was a voluntary one. It was given during the course of a perfectly legitimate police investigation of an unsolved murder. The Court says that what happened during this investigation "affected" the trial. I had always supposed that the whole purpose of a police investigation of a murder was to "affect" the trial of the murderer, and that it would be only an incompetent, unsuccessful, or corrupt investigation which would not do so. The Court further says that the Illinois police officers did not advise the petitioner of his "constitutional rights" before he confessed to the murder. This Court has never held that the Constitution re-

\* "In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right . . . to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defence."

quires the police to give any "advice" under circumstances such as these.

Supported by no stronger authority than its own rhetoric, the Court today converts a routine police investigation of an unsolved murder into a distorted analogue of a judicial trial. It imports into this investigation constitutional concepts historically applicable only after the onset of formal prosecutorial proceedings. By doing so, I think the Court perverts those precious constitutional guarantees, and frustrates the vital interests of society in preserving the legitimate and proper functions of honest and purposeful police investigation.

Like my Brother CLARK, I cannot escape the logic of my Brother WHITE's conclusions as to the extraordinary implications which emanate from the Court's opinion in this case, and I share their views as to the untold and highly unfortunate impact today's decision may have upon the fair administration of criminal justice. I can only hope we have completely misunderstood what the Court has said.

MR. JUSTICE WHITE, with whom MR. JUSTICE CLARK and MR. JUSTICE STEWART join, dissenting.

In *Massiah v. United States*, 377 U. S. 201, the Court held that as of the date of the indictment the prosecution is disentitled to secure admissions from the accused. The Court now moves that date back to the time when the prosecution begins to "focus" on the accused. Although the opinion purports to be limited to the facts of this case, it would be naive to think that the new constitutional right announced will depend upon whether the accused has retained his own counsel, cf. *Gideon v. Wainwright*, 372 U. S. 335; *Griffin v. Illinois*, 351 U. S. 12; *Douglas v. California*, 372 U. S. 353, or has asked to consult with counsel in the course of interrogation. Cf. *Carnley v. Cochran*, 369 U. S. 506. At the very least the Court holds that once the accused becomes a suspect and, presumably, is arrested, any admission made to the police thereafter is inadmissible in evidence unless the accused has waived his right to counsel. The decision is thus another major step in the direction of the goal which the Court seemingly has in mind—to bar from evidence all admissions obtained from an individual suspected of crime, whether involuntarily made or not. It does of course put us one step "ahead" of the English judges who have had the good sense to leave the matter a discretionary one with the trial court.\* I reject this step and the invitation to go farther which the Court has now issued.

\* [I]t seems from reported cases that the judges have given up enforcing their own rules, for it is no longer the practice to exclude evidence obtained by questioning in custody. . . . A traditional principle of 'fairness' to criminals, which has quite possibly lost some of the reason for its existence, is maintained in words while it is disregarded in fact. . . .

"The reader may be expecting at this point a vigorous denunciation of the

By abandoning the voluntary-involuntary test for admissibility of confessions, the Court seems driven by the notion that it is uncivilized law enforcement to use an accused's own admissions against him at his trial. It attempts to find a home for this new and nebulous rule of due process by attaching it to the right to counsel guaranteed in the federal system by the Sixth Amendment and binding upon the States by virtue of the due process guarantee of the Fourteenth Amendment. *Gideon v. Wainwright*, *supra*. The right to counsel now not only entitles the accused to counsel's advice and aid in preparing for trial but stands as an impenetrable barrier to any interrogation once the accused has become a suspect. From that very moment apparently his right to counsel attaches, a rule wholly unworkable and impossible to administer unless police cars are equipped with public defenders and undercover agents and police informants have defense counsel at their side. I would not abandon the Court's prior cases defining with some care and analysis the circumstances requiring the presence or aid of counsel and substitute the amorphous and wholly unworkable principle that counsel is constitutionally required whenever he would or could be helpful. *Hamilton v. Alabama*, 368 U. S. 52; *White v. Maryland*, 373 U. S. 59; *Gideon v. Wainwright*, *supra*. These cases dealt with the requirement of counsel at proceedings in which definable rights could be won or lost, not with stages where probative evidence might be obtained. Under this new approach one might just as well argue that a potential defendant is constitutionally entitled to a lawyer before, not after, he commits a crime, since it is then that crucial incriminating evidence is put within the reach of the Government by the would-be accused. Until now there simply has been no right guaranteed by the Federal Constitution to be free from the use at trial of a voluntary admission made prior to indictment.

It is incongruous to assume that the provision for counsel in the Sixth Amendment was meant to amend or supersede the self-incrimination provision of the Fifth Amendment, which is now applicable to the States. *Malloy v. Hogan*, 378 U. S. 1. That amendment addresses itself to the very issue of incriminating admissions of an accused and resolves it by proscribing only compelled statements. Neither the Framers, the constitutional language, a century of decisions of this Court nor Professor Wigmore provides an iota of support for the idea that an accused has an absolute constitutional right not to answer

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police and of the judges, and a plea for a return to the Judges' Rules as interpreted in 1930. What has to be considered, however, is whether these Rules are a workable part of the machinery of justice. Perhaps the truth is that the Rules have been abandoned, by tacit consent, just because they are an unreasonable restriction upon the activities of the police in bringing criminals to book." Williams, *Questioning by the Police: Some Practical Considerations*, [1960] *Crim. L. Rev.* 325, 331-332. See also [1964] *Crim. L. Rev.* 161-182.

even in the absence of compulsion—the constitutional right not to incriminate himself by making voluntary disclosures.

Today's decision cannot be squared with other provisions of the Constitution which, in my view, define the system of criminal justice this Court is empowered to administer. The Fourth Amendment permits upon probable cause even compulsory searches of the suspect and his possessions and the use of the fruits of the search at trial, all in the absence of counsel. The Fifth Amendment and state constitutional provisions authorize, indeed require, inquisitorial grand jury proceedings at which a potential defendant, in the absence of counsel, is shielded against no more than compulsory incrimination. *Mulloney v. United States*, 79 F. 2d 566, 578 (C. A. 1st Cir.), *United States v. Benjamin*, 120 F. 2d 521, 522 (C. A. 2d Cir.); *United States v. Scully*, 225 F. 2d 113, 115 (C. A. 2d Cir.); *United States v. Gilboy*, 160 F. Supp. 442 (D. C. M. D. Pa.). A grand jury witness, who may be a suspect, is interrogated and his answers, at least until today, are admissible in evidence at trial. And these provisions have been thought of as constitutional safeguards to persons suspected of an offense. Furthermore, until now, the Constitution has permitted the accused to be fingerprinted and to be identified in a line-up or in the courtroom itself.

The Court chooses to ignore these matters and to rely on the virtues and morality of a system of criminal law enforcement which does not depend on the "confession." No such judgment is to be found in the Constitution. It might be appropriate for a legislature to provide that a suspect should not be consulted during a criminal investigation, that an accused should never be called before a grand jury to answer, even if he wants to, what may well be incriminating questions; and that no person, whether he be a suspect, guilty criminal or innocent bystander, should be put to the ordeal of responding to orderly noncompulsory inquiry by the State. But this is not the system our Constitution requires. The only "inquisitions" the Constitution forbids are those which compel incrimination. Escobedo's statements were not compelled and the Court does not hold that they were.

This new American judges' rule, which is to be applied in both federal and state courts, is perhaps thought to be a necessary safeguard against the possibility of extorted confessions. To this extent it reflects a deep-seated distrust of law enforcement officers everywhere, unsupported by relevant data or current material based upon our own experience. Obviously law enforcement officers can make mistakes and exceed their authority, as today's decision shows that even judges can do, but I have somewhat more faith than the Court evidently has in the ability and desire of prosecutors and of the power of the appellate courts to discern and correct such violations of the law.

The Court may be concerned with a narrower matter: the un-



knowing defendant who responds to police questioning because he mistakenly believes that he must and that his admissions will not be used against him. But this worry hardly calls for the broadside the Court has now fired. The failure to inform an accused that he need not answer and that his answers may be used against him is very relevant indeed to whether the disclosures are compelled. Cases in this Court, to say the least, have never placed a premium on ignorance of constitutional rights. If an accused is told he must answer and does not know better, it would be very doubtful that the resulting admissions could be used against him. When the accused has not been informed of his rights at all the Court characteristically and properly looks very closely at the surrounding circumstances. See *Ward v. Texas*, 316 U. S. 547; *Haley v. Ohio*, 332 U. S. 596, *Payne v. Arkansas*, 356 U. S. 560. I would continue to do so. But in this case Danny Escobedo knew full well that he did not have to answer and knew full well that his lawyer had advised him not to answer.

I do not suggest for a moment that law enforcement will be destroyed by the rule announced today. The need for peace and order is too insistent for that. But it will be crippled and its task made a great deal more difficult, all in my opinion, for unsound, unstated reasons, which can find no home in any of the provisions of the Constitution.

# THE FIRE NEXT TIME

JAMES BALDWIN



No one seems to know where the Nation of Islam gets its money. A vast amount, of course, is contributed by Negroes, but there are rumors to the effect that people like Birchites and certain Texas oil millionaires look with favor on the movement. I have no way of knowing whether there is any truth to the rumors, though since these people make such a point of keeping the races separate, I wouldn't be surprised if for this smoke there was some fire. In any case, during a recent Muslim rally, George Lincoln Rockwell, the chief of the American Nazi party, made a point of contributing about twenty dollars to the cause, and he and Malcolm X decided that, racially speaking, anyway, they were in complete agreement. The glorification of one race and the consequent debasement of another—or others—always has been and always will be a recipe for murder. There is no way around this. If one is permitted to treat any group of people with special disfavor because of their race or the color of their skin, there is no limit to what one will force them to endure, and, since the entire race has been mysteriously indicted, no reason not to attempt to destroy it root and branch. This is precisely what the Nazis attempted. Their only originality lay in the means they used. It is scarcely worthwhile to attempt remembering how many times the sun has looked down on the slaughter of the innocents. I am very much concerned that American Negroes achieve their freedom here in the United States. But I am also concerned for their dignity, for

James Baldwin, from *The Fire Next Time*. Copyright © 1962, 1963 by James Baldwin and used with the permission of the publishers, The Dial Press, Inc.

the health of their souls, and must oppose any attempt that Negroes may make to do to others what has been done to them. I think I know—we see it around us every day—the spiritual wasteland to which that road leads. It is so simple a fact and one that is so hard, apparently, to grasp. *Whoever debases others is debasing himself.* That is not a mystical statement but a most realistic one, which is proved by the eyes of any Alabama sheriff—and I would not like to see Negroes ever arrive at so wretched a condition.

Now, it is extremely unlikely that Negroes will ever rise to power in the United States, because they are only approximately a ninth of this nation. They are not in the position of the Africans, who are attempting to reclaim their land and break the colonial yoke and recover from the colonial experience. The Negro situation is dangerous in a different way, both for the Negro qua Negro and for the country of which he forms so troubled and troubling a part. The American Negro is a unique creation, he has no counterpart anywhere, and no predecessors. The Muslims react to this fact by referring to the Negro as “the so-called American Negro” and substituting for the names inherited from slavery the letter “X.” It is a fact that every American Negro bears a name that originally belonged to the white man whose chattel he was. I am called Baldwin because I was either sold by my African tribe or kidnapped out of it into the hands of a white Christian named Baldwin, who forced me to kneel at the foot of the cross. I am, then, both visibly and legally the descendant of slaves in a white, Protestant country, and this is what it means to be an American Negro, this is who he is—a kidnapped pagan, who was sold like an animal and treated like one, who was once defined by the American Constitution as “three-fifths” of a man, and who, according to the Dred Scott decision, had no rights that a white man was bound to respect. And today, a hundred years after his technical emancipation, he remains—with the possible exception of the American Indian—the most despised creature in his country. Now, there is simply no possibility of a real change in the Negro’s situation without the most radical and far-reaching changes in the American political and social structure. And it is clear that white Americans are not simply unwilling to effect these changes, they are, in the main, so slothful have they become, unable even to envision them. It must be added that the Negro himself no longer believes in the good faith of white Americans—if, indeed, he ever could have. What the Negro *has* discovered, and on an international level, is that power to intimidate which he has always had privately but hitherto could manipulate only privately—for private ends often, for limited ends always. And therefore when the country speaks of a “new” Negro, which it has been doing every hour on the hour for decades, it is not really referring to a change in the Negro, which, in any case, it is quite incapable of assessing, but

only to a new difficulty in keeping him in his place, to the fact that it encounters him (again! again!) barring yet another door to its spiritual and social ease. This is probably, hard and odd as it may sound, the most important thing that one human being can do for another—it is certainly *one* of the most important things; hence the torment and necessity of love—and this is the enormous contribution that the Negro has made to this otherwise shapeless and undiscovered country. Consequently, white Americans are in nothing more deluded than in supposing that Negroes could ever have imagined that white people would “give” them anything. It is rare indeed that people give. Most people guard and keep, they suppose that it is they themselves and what they identify with themselves that they are guarding and keeping, whereas what they are actually guarding and keeping is their system of reality and what they assume themselves to be. One can give nothing whatever without giving oneself—that is to say, risking oneself. If one cannot risk oneself, then one is simply incapable of giving. And, after all, one can give freedom only by setting someone free. This, in the case of the Negro, the American republic has never become sufficiently mature to do. White Americans have contented themselves with gestures that are now described as “tokenism.” For hard example, white Americans congratulate themselves on the 1954 Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation in the schools; they suppose, in spite of the mountain of evidence that has since accumulated to the contrary, that this was proof of a change of heart—or, as they like to say, progress. Perhaps. It all depends on how one reads the word “progress.” Most of the Negroes I know do not believe that this immense concession would ever have been made if it had not been for the competition of the Cold War, and the fact that Africa was clearly liberating herself and therefore had, for political reasons, to be wooed by the descendants of her former masters. Had it been a matter of love or justice, the 1954 decision would surely have occurred sooner, were it not for the realities of power in this difficult era, it might very well not have occurred yet. This seems an extremely harsh way of stating the case—ungrateful, as it were—but the evidence that supports this way of stating it is not easily refuted. I myself do not think that it can be refuted at all. In any event, the sloppy and fatuous nature of American good will can never be relied upon to deal with hard problems. These have been dealt with, when they have been dealt with at all, out of necessity—and in political terms, anyway, necessity means concessions made in order to stay on top. I think this is a fact, which it serves no purpose to deny, *but, whether it is a fact or not, this is what the black population of the world, including black Americans, really believe.* The word “independence” in Africa and the word “integration” here are almost equally meaningless, that is, Europe has not yet left Africa, and black

men here are not yet free. And both of these last statements are undeniable facts, related facts, containing the gravest implications for us all. The Negroes of this country may never be able to rise to power, but they are very well placed indeed to precipitate chaos and ring down the curtain on the American dream.

This has everything to do, of course, with the nature of that dream and with the fact that we Americans, of whatever color, do not dare examine it and are far from having made it a reality. There are too many things we do not wish to know about ourselves. People are not, for example, terribly anxious to be equal (equal, after all, to what and to whom?) but they love the idea of being superior. And this human truth has an especially grinding force here, where identity is almost impossible to achieve and people are perpetually attempting to find their feet on the shifting sands of status. (Consider the history of labor in a country in which, spiritually speaking, there are no workers, only candidates for the hand of the boss's daughter.) Furthermore, I have met only a very few people—and most of these were not Americans—who had any real desire to be free. Freedom is hard to bear. It can be objected that I am speaking of political freedom in spiritual terms, but the political institutions of any nation are always menaced and are ultimately controlled by the spiritual state of that nation. We are controlled here by our confusion, far more than we know, and the American dream has therefore become something much more closely resembling a nightmare, on the private, domestic, and international levels. Privately, we cannot stand our lives and dare not examine them, domestically, we take no responsibility for (and no pride in) what goes on in our country, and, internationally, for many millions of people, we are an unmitigated disaster. Whoever doubts this last statement has only to open his ears, his heart, his mind, to the testimony of—for example—any Cuban peasant or any Spanish poet, and ask himself what *he* would feel about us if *he* were the victim of our performance in pre-Castro Cuba or in Spain. We defend our curious role in Spain by referring to the Russian menace and the necessity of protecting the free world. It has not occurred to us that we have simply been mesmerized by Russia, and that the only real advantage Russia has in what we think of as a struggle between the East and the West is the moral history of the Western world. Russia's secret weapon is the bewilderment and despair and hunger of millions of people of whose existence we are scarcely aware. The Russian Communists are not in the least concerned about these people. But our ignorance and indecision have had the effect, if not of delivering them into Russian hands, of plunging them very deeply in the Russian shadow, for which effect—and it is hard to blame them—the most articulate among them, and the most oppressed as well, distrust us all the more. Our power and our fear of change help bind these

people to their misery and bewilderment, and insofar as they find this state intolerable we are intolerably menaced. For if they find their state intolerable, but are too heavily oppressed to change it, they are simply pawns in the hands of larger powers, which, in such a context, are always unscrupulous, and when, eventually, they do change their situation—as in Cuba—we are menaced more than ever, by the vacuum that succeeds all violent upheavals. We should certainly know by now that it is one thing to overthrow a dictator or repel an invader and quite another thing really to achieve a revolution. Time and time and time again, the people discover that they have merely betrayed themselves into the hands of yet another Pharaoh, who, since he was necessary to put the broken country together, will not let them go. Perhaps, people being the conundrums that they are, and having so little desire to shoulder the burden of their lives, this is what will always happen. But at the bottom of my heart I do not believe this. I think that people can be better than that, and I know that people can be better than they are. We are capable of bearing a great burden, once we discover that the burden is reality and arrive where reality is. Anyway, the point here is that we are living in an age of revolution, whether we will or no, and that America is the only Western nation with both the power and, as I hope to suggest, the experience that may help to make these revolutions real and minimize the human damage. Any attempt we make to oppose these outbursts of energy is tantamount to signing our death warrant.

Behind what we think of as the Russian menace lies what we do not wish to face, and what white Americans do not face when they regard a Negro: reality—the fact that life is tragic. Life is tragic simply because the earth turns and the sun inexorably rises and sets, and one day, for each of us, the sun will go down for the last, last time. Perhaps the whole root of our trouble, the human trouble, is that we will sacrifice all the beauty of our lives, will imprison ourselves in totems, taboos, crosses, blood sacrifices, steeples, mosques, races, armies, flags, nations, in order to deny the fact of death, which is the only fact we have. It seems to me that one ought to rejoice in the *fact* of death—ought to decide, indeed, to *earn* one's death by confronting with passion the conundrum of life. One is responsible to life. It is the small beacon in that terrifying darkness from which we come and to which we shall return. One must negotiate this passage as nobly as possible, for the sake of those who are coming after us. But white Americans do not believe in death, and this is why the darkness of my skin so intimidates them. And this is also why the presence of the Negro in this country can bring about its destruction. It is the responsibility of free men to trust and to celebrate what is constant—birth, struggle, and death are constant, and so is love, though we may not always think so—and to apprehend the nature of change, to be able and

willing to change I speak of change not on the surface but in the depths—change in the sense of renewal. But renewal becomes impossible if one supposes things to be constant that are not—safety, for example, or money, or power. One clings then to chimeras, by which one can only be betrayed, and the entire hope—the entire possibility—of freedom disappears. And by destruction I mean precisely the abdication by Americans of any effort really to be free. The Negro can precipitate this abdication because white Americans have never, in all their long history, been able to look on him as a man like themselves. This point need not be labored, it is proved over and over again by the Negro's continuing position here, and his indescribable struggle to defeat the stratagems that white Americans have used, and use, to deny him his humanity. America could have used in other ways the energy that both groups have expended in this conflict. America, of all the Western nations, has been best placed to prove the uselessness and the obsolescence of the concept of color. But it has not dared to accept this opportunity, or even to conceive of it as an opportunity. White Americans have thought of it as their shame, and have envied those more civilized and elegant European nations that were untroubled by the presence of black men on their shores. This is because white Americans have supposed "Europe" and "civilization" to be synonyms—which they are not—and have been distrustful of other standards and other sources of vitality, especially those produced in America itself, and have attempted to behave in all matters as though what was best for Europe was also best for them. What it comes to is that if we, who can scarcely be considered a white nation, persist in thinking of ourselves as one, we condemn ourselves, with the truly white nations, to sterility and decay, whereas if we could accept ourselves *as we are*, we might bring new life to the Western achievements, and transform them. The price of this transformation is the unconditional freedom of the Negro; it is not too much to say that he, who has been so long rejected, must now be embraced, and at no matter what psychic or social risk. He is *the* key figure in his country, and the American future is precisely as bright or as dark as his. And the Negro recognizes this, in a negative way. Hence the question: Do I really *want* to be integrated into a burning house?

White Americans find it as difficult as white people elsewhere do to divest themselves of the notion that they are in possession of some intrinsic value that black people need, or want. And this assumption—which, for example, makes the solution to the Negro problem depend on the speed with which Negroes accept and adopt white standards—is revealed in all kinds of striking ways, from Bobby Kennedy's assurance that a Negro can become President in forty years to the unfortunate tone of warm congratulation with which so many liberals

address their Negro equals. It is the Negro, of course, who is presumed to have become equal—an achievement that not only proves the comforting fact that perseverance has no color but also overwhelmingly corroborates the white man's sense of his own value. Alas, this value can scarcely be corroborated in any other way; there is certainly little enough in the white man's public or private life that one should desire to imitate. White men, at the bottom of their hearts, know this. Therefore, a vast amount of the energy that goes into what we call the Negro problem is produced by the white man's profound desire not to be judged by those who are not white, not to be seen as he is, and at the same time a vast amount of the white anguish is rooted in the white man's equally profound need to be seen as he is, to be released from the tyranny of his mirror. All of us know, whether or not we are able to admit it, that mirrors can only lie, that death by drowning is all that awaits one there. It is for this reason that love is so desperately sought and so cunningly avoided. Love takes off the masks that we fear we cannot live without and know we cannot live within. I use the word "love" here not merely in the personal sense but as a state of being, or a state of grace—not in the infantile American sense of being made happy but in the tough and universal sense of quest and daring and growth. And I submit, then, that the racial tensions that menace Americans today have little to do with real antipathy—on the contrary, indeed—and are involved only symbolically with color. These tensions are rooted in the very same depths as those from which love springs, or murder. The white man's unadmitted—and apparently, to him, unspeakable—private fears and longings are projected onto the Negro. The only way he can be released from the Negro's tyrannical power over him is to consent, in effect, to become black himself, to become a part of that suffering and dancing country that he now watches wistfully from the heights of his lonely power and, armed with spiritual traveller's checks, visits surreptitiously after dark. How can one respect, let alone adopt, the values of a people who do not, on any level whatever, live the way they say they do, or the way they say they should? I cannot accept the proposition that the four-hundred-year travail of the American Negro should result merely in his attainment of the present level of the American civilization. I am far from convinced that being released from the African witch doctor was worthwhile if I am now—in order to support the moral contradictions and the spiritual aridity of my life—expected to become dependent on the American psychiatrist. It is a bargain I refuse. The only thing white people have that black people need, or should want, is power—and no one holds power forever. White people cannot, in the generality, be taken as models of how to live. Rather, the white man is himself in sore need of new standards, which will release him from his confusion and place him



once again in fruitful communion with the depths of his own being. And I repeat The price of the liberation of the white people is the liberation of the blacks—the total liberation, in the cities, in the towns, before the law, and in the mind. Why, for example—especially knowing the family as I do— I should *want* to marry your sister is a great mystery to me. But your sister and I have every right to marry if we wish to, and no one has the right to stop us. If she cannot raise me to her level, perhaps I can raise her to mine

In short, we, the black and the white, deeply need each other here if we are really to become a nation—if we are really, that is, to achieve our identity, our maturity, as men and women. To create one nation has proved to be a hideously difficult task; there is certainly no need now to create two, one black and one white. But white men with far more political power than that possessed by the Nation of Islam movement have been advocating exactly this, in effect, for generations. If this sentiment is honored when it falls from the lips of Senator Byrd, then there is no reason it should not be honored when it falls from the lips of Malcolm X. And any Congressional committee wishing to investigate the latter must also be willing to investigate the former. They are expressing exactly the same sentiments and represent exactly the same danger. There is absolutely no reason to suppose that white people are better equipped to frame the laws by which I am to be governed than I am. It is entirely unacceptable that I should have no voice in the political affairs of my own country, for I am not a ward of America; I am one of the first Americans to arrive on these shores.

This past, the Negro's past, of rope, fire, torture, castration, infanticide, rape, death and humiliation, fear by day and night, fear as deep as the marrow of the bone, doubt that he was worthy of life, since everyone around him denied it, sorrow for his women, for his kinfolk, for his children, who needed his protection, and whom he could not protect; rage, hatred, and murder, hatred for white men so deep that it often turned against him and his own, and made all love, all trust, all joy impossible—this past, this endless struggle to achieve and reveal and confirm a human identity, human authority, yet contains, for all its horror, something very beautiful. I do not mean to be sentimental about suffering—enough is certainly as good as a feast—but people who cannot suffer can never grow up, can never discover who they are. That man who is forced each day to snatch his manhood, his identity, out of the fire of human cruelty that rages to destroy it knows, if he survives his effort, and even if he does not survive it, something about himself and human life that no school on earth—and, indeed, no church—can teach. He achieves his own authority, and that is unshakable. This is because, in order to save his life, he is forced to look beneath appearances, to take nothing for

granted, to hear the meaning behind the words. If one is continually surviving the worst that life can bring, one eventually ceases to be controlled by a fear of what life can bring; whatever it brings must be borne. And at this level of experience one's bitterness begins to be palatable, and hatred becomes too heavy a sack to carry. The apprehension of life here so briefly and inadequately sketched has been the experience of generations of Negroes, and it helps to explain how they have endured and how they have been able to produce children of kindergarten age who can walk through mobs to get to school. It demands great force and great cunning continually to assault the mighty and indifferent fortress of white supremacy, as Negroes in this country have done so long. It demands great spiritual resilience not to hate the hater whose foot is on your neck, and an even greater miracle of perception and charity not to teach your child to hate. The Negro boys and girls who are facing mobs today come out of a long line of improbable aristocrats—the only genuine aristocrats this country has produced. I say "this country" because their frame of reference was totally American. They were hewing out of the mountain of white supremacy the stone of their individuality. I have great respect for that unsung army of black men and women who trudged down black lanes and entered back doors, saying "Yes, sir" and "No, Ma'am" in order to acquire a new roof for the schoolhouse, new books, a new chemistry lab, more beds for the dormitories, more dormitories. They did not like saying "Yes, sir" and "No Ma'am," but the country was in no hurry to educate Negroes, these black men and women knew that the job had to be done, and they put their pride in their pockets in order to do it. It is very hard to believe that they were in any way inferior to the white men and women who opened those back doors. It is very hard to believe that those men and women, raising their children, eating their greens, crying their curses, weeping their tears, singing their songs, making their love, as the sun rose, as the sun set, were in any way inferior to the white men and women who crept over to share these splendors after the sun went down. But we must avoid the European error; we must not suppose that, because the situation, the ways, the perceptions of black people so radically differed from those of whites, they were racially superior. I am proud of these people not because of their color but because of their intelligence and their spiritual force and their beauty. The country should be proud of them, too, but, alas, not many people in this country even know of their existence. And the reason for this ignorance is that a knowledge of the role these people played—and play—in American life would reveal more about America to Americans than Americans wish to know.

The American Negro has the great advantage of having never believed that collection of myths to which white Americans cling:

that their ancestors were all freedom-loving heroes, that they were born in the greatest country the world has ever seen, or that Americans are invincible in battle and wise in peace, that Americans have always dealt honorably with Mexicans and Indians and all other neighbors or inferiors, that American men are the world's most direct and virile, that American women are pure Negroes know far more about white Americans than that, it can almost be said, in fact, that they know about white Americans what parents—or, anyway, mothers—know about their children, and that they very often regard white Americans that way. And perhaps this attitude, held in spite of what they know and have endured, helps to explain why Negroes, on the whole, and until lately, have allowed themselves to feel so little hatred. The tendency has really been, insofar as this was possible, to dismiss white people as the slightly mad victims of their own brainwashing. One watched the lives they led. One could not be fooled about that; one watched the things they did and the excuses that they gave themselves, and if a white man was really in trouble, deep trouble, it was to the Negro's door that he came. And one felt that if one had had that white man's worldly advantages, one would never have become as bewildered and as joyless and as thoughtlessly cruel as he. The Negro came to the white man for a roof or for five dollars or for a letter to the judge; the white man came to the Negro for love. But he was not often able to give what he came seeking. The price was too high, he had too much to lose. And the Negro knew this, too. When one knows this about a man, it is impossible for one to hate him, but unless he becomes a man—becomes equal—it is also impossible for one to love him. Ultimately, one tends to avoid him, for the universal characteristic of children is to assume that they have a monopoly on trouble, and therefore a monopoly on *you*. (Ask any Negro what he knows about the white people with whom he works. And then ask the white people with whom he works what they know about *him*.)

How can the American Negro past be used? It is entirely possible that this dishonored past will rise up soon to smite all of us. There are some wars, for example (if anyone on the globe is still mad enough to go to war) that the American Negro will not support, however many of his people may be coerced—and there is a limit to the number of people any government can put in prison, and a rigid limit indeed to the practicality of such a course. A bill is coming in that I fear America is not prepared to pay. "The problem of the twentieth century," wrote W. E. B. Du Bois around sixty years ago, "is the problem of the color line." A fearful and delicate problem, which compromises, when it does not corrupt, all the American efforts to build a better world—here, there, or anywhere. It is for this reason that everything white Americans think they believe in must now be reexamined. What

one would not like to see again is the consolidation of peoples on the basis of their color. But as long as we in the West place on color the value that we do, we make it impossible for the great unwashed to consolidate themselves according to any other principle. Color is not a human or a personal reality, it is a political reality. But this is a distinction so extremely hard to make that the West has not been able to make it yet. And at the center of this dreadful storm, this vast confusion, stand the black people of this nation, who must now share the fate of a nation that has never accepted them, to which they were brought in chains. Well, if this is so, one has no choice but to do all in one's power to change that fate, and at no matter what risk—eviction, imprisonment, torture, death. For the sake of one's children, in order to minimize the bill that *they* must pay, one must be careful not to take refuge in any delusion—and the value placed on the color of the skin is always and everywhere and forever a delusion. I know that what I am asking is impossible. But in our time, as in every time, the impossible is the least that one can demand—and one is, after all, emboldened by the spectacle of human history in general, and American Negro history in particular, for it testifies to nothing less than the perpetual achievement of the impossible

When I was very young, and was dealing with my buddies in those wine- and urine-stained hallways, something in me wondered, *What will happen to all that beauty?* For black people, though I am aware that some of us, black and white, do not know it yet, are very beautiful. And when I sat at Elijah's table and watched the baby, the women, and the men, and we talked about God's—or Allah's—vengeance, I wondered, when that vengeance was achieved, *What will happen to all that beauty then?* I could also see that the intransigence and ignorance of the white world might make that vengeance inevitable—a vengeance that does not really depend on, and cannot really be executed by, any person or organization, and that cannot be prevented by any police force or army: historical vengeance, a cosmic vengeance, based on the law that we recognize when we say, "Whatever goes up must come down." And here we are, at the center of the arc, trapped in the gaudiest, most valuable, and most improbable water wheel the world has ever seen. Everything now, we must assume, is in our hands; we have no right to assume otherwise. If we—and now I mean the relatively conscious whites and the relatively conscious blacks, who must, like lovers, insist on, or create, the consciousness of the others—do not falter in our duty now, we may be able, handful that we are, to end the racial nightmare, and achieve our country, and change the history of the world. If we do not now dare everything, the fulfillment of that prophecy, re-created from the Bible in song by a slave, is upon us: *God gave Noah the rainbow sign, No more water, the fire next time!*

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*P A R T V*

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***TONE AND BELIEF:  
EXPERIENCE AND  
KNOWLEDGE***

We have considered the importance of tone to any argument, and especially in relation to public figures. No matter how important a speaker is, if he is trying to persuade his audience, then he places a value on its receptivity. Any move on his part which would alienate the audience subverts all his best efforts to persuade. Surely this observation parallels also the cases where, to one degree or another, our selling model applies.

This question might seem to imply that in certain areas of knowledge (biology, psychology, history, for example) at least the

experts are concerned solely with the communication of hard facts rather than with elegancies of phrase. It would be nice if this were so, but a frank appeal to common sense suggests otherwise. The physics professor is, presumably, disseminating knowledge, even his most impatient student admits that the professor knows the material. Why, then, does the student skip class? Perhaps because he finds the professor too arrogant, or too timid, or too whatever. Why does the student in the back of the class begin to nod? Fatigue perhaps. But we know that in some cases, even though the class is a captive audience (perhaps even because it is so), instructor's tone has alienated him from his audience.

Why should we think that the imparting of knowledge is separable from rhetoric? If it were, why would scientists try to persuade each other to their own way of thinking? Probably because the interpretation of data involves conceptual frameworks—beliefs. And where there is any difference of belief, we have room for persuasion. By “knowledge” we ordinarily mean the fixation of belief in particular matters at a specified time. Thus, the history of science would be a study of the history of intellectual controversies concomitant with the fixing of beliefs.

Suppose that one wishes to present a new interpretation, with or without benefit of fresh evidence to back it up. How does one approach his colleagues in print? The question is not very different from what we have spoken of in previous sections. Again, if the speaker values a favorable response from his audience, then he will couch his approach suitably. One approaches one's colleagues by means of professional papers, which can be rejected by editors, like bad TV commercials, even experts can be turned off.

But experts do not always write for experts. Nor is knowledge the exclusive property of experts. The student who has done a first-rate research job for his class paper has knowledge which he wishes to impart. The newspaper reporter has discovered the simultaneous disappearance of a county clerk and a substantial sum of money. The young executive has found that by implementing a new system of accounting, he can save his company considerable expense. Discovery is only the first step in the fixation of belief. Society values as knowledge only those beliefs which, having been exposed to public criticism, earn, dispassionately, the approval of time. Naturally, the student does not wish to await the trump of doom for his work to be assessed and graded; generally speaking, though, to view one's work in relation to the wider context of discussion and debate may help avoid the excesses of tone of many undergraduate themes. We want to sell our product, not be turned summarily off. Ask yourself, for whom is this written?

The psychoanalyst is in a peculiar circumstance in this connection. In the following part, Erich Fromm purports to describe

the structure of man's symbolic language as expressed in dreams and myths. But since some expert psychologists deny that dreams have any meaning whatever, the rhetorical problem is not easy. What evidence can Fromm offer to prove his case? What counter-evidence could anyone else offer? What shall count as evidence? Perhaps we ought to put the question differently: How does Fromm convince his reader of the usefulness of his method? Is he considering knowledge or beliefs about the Jonah story? What indications are there in the tone of the language which adds to or detracts from the assent of a more or less neutral, sceptical reader? Finally, compare Fromm's essay with John Pfeiffer's "The Thinking Machine." Which essay is more "objective"? When we say "objective," do we refer to the tone of the speaker, or to the nature of his evidence, or what?

A quite different rhetorical problem confronts Ruth and Edward Brecher. To begin with, the audience and the speakers are quite different in their relation to each other. (Why?) This essay is interesting, partly for the way in which evidence is handled, but also because of the consistency of its tone. How would one describe this tone? Do the Brechers heap insult on the chain smoker? If I smoke at all, am I stupid? If I am a smoker, do the speakers distance themselves from me, say, morally or intellectually? Or are the cigaret manufacturers the villains? Is there some touch of the moral superior about the language of this piece? And if not, how do we explain why not? (What does it mean if, given the hard facts, increasing numbers of human beings go on smoking?) My wife is a chain smoker. How should I feel toward her when I finish this article? And more important, what shall I say to her? Is there a similarity in the problem of tone between this essay and that in Baldwin's **The Fire Next Time**?

Yet another rhetorical problem arises in "Came the Revolution." How does the scientist describe his subject matter if he is part of it? John Kenneth Galbraith is one of the most famous, most influential exponents of Keynesian economics. In this essay, he describes a process in which he himself has played an important part. Is this essay successful in its tone? Or does Professor Galbraith's tone separate him from his (largely **New York Times Book Review Section**) audience? Keynes is a highly controversial figure in economics. Some people believe that Keynesian and Marxian ideas are identical. Does Galbraith in any way try to answer these critics? Again, since in the field of economics, the experts like Galbraith advise on governmental policy, the tone of this essay will be of special importance. Galbraith believes in Keynesian economics, and as an economist of international repute, he knows his field. Is there any sense that Galbraith is aware of his dual role as critic and advocate? Is there any touch of apologetics in the tone of this essay?

In several ways these paragraphs have tried to suggest a single question: Is there any way one can tell if an author knows what he is talking about? How can one convey knowledge without insulting the audience, which is, by implication in the matter under discussion, unlearned? If we look at "Useless Knowledge," we can see at least one way of looking at knowledge which might be relevant to this question. Bertrand Russell raises another set of questions entirely. What is the value of knowledge? How should one feel toward knowledge itself? In a growing technology, such questions become increasingly important. Russell appears to defend knowledge which has little or no instrumental value, which in itself might be all right; but we must bear in mind that the culture for which he writes is itself highly pragmatic or instrumental in its values. What attitude toward science does this essay convey? Isn't Bertrand Russell known as a philosopher of science? Is Russell's point that humanistic studies are "useless," but nevertheless valuable? If so, does he provide any reliable ground on which to defend the humanities? Is the tone of this essay effective?

Finally, once again, is there any way to tell if the author of a piece of writing knows what he is talking about? How about Sir James Jeans? Robert Warshow tries to fix belief in matters of artistic interpretation. Can this work? Does it work? How do your own experiences with Western movies fit Warshow's conceptual framework?



# THE DYING SUN

SIR JAMES JEANS



A few stars are known which are hardly bigger than the earth, but the majority are so large that hundreds of thousands of earths could be packed inside each and leave room to spare, here and there we come upon a giant star large enough to contain millions of millions of earths. And the total number of stars in the universe is probably something like the total number of grains of sand on all the sea-shores of the world. Such is the littleness of our home in space when measured up against the total substance of the universe.

This vast multitude of stars are wandering about in space. A few form groups which journey in company, but the majority are solitary travellers. And they travel through a universe so spacious that it is an event of almost unimaginable rarity for a star to come anywhere near to another star. For the most part each voyages in splendid isolation, like a ship on an empty ocean. In a scale model in which the stars are ships, the average ship will be well over a million miles from its nearest neighbour, whence it is easy to understand why a ship seldom finds another within hailing distance.

We believe, nevertheless, that some two thousand million years ago this rare event took place, and that a second star, wandering blindly through space, happened to come within hailing distance of the sun. Just as the sun and moon raise tides on the earth, so this second star must have raised tides on the surface of the sun. But they would be very different from the puny tides which the small mass of the moon raises in our oceans; a huge tidal wave must have travelled

over the surface of the sun, ultimately forming a mountain of prodigious height, which would rise ever higher and higher as the cause of the disturbance came nearer and nearer. And, before the second star began to recede, its tidal pull had become so powerful that this mountain was torn to pieces and threw off small fragments of itself, much as the crest of a wave throws off spray. These small fragments have been circulating around their parent sun ever since. They are the planets, great and small, of which our earth is one.

The sun and the other stars we see in the sky are all intensely hot—far too hot for life to be able to obtain or retain a footing on them. So also no doubt were the ejected fragments of the sun when they were first thrown off. Gradually they cooled, until now they have but little intrinsic heat left, their warmth being derived almost entirely from the radiation which the sun pours down upon them. In course of time, we know not how, when, or why, one of these cooling fragments gave birth to life. It started in simple organisms whose vital capacities consisted of little beyond reproduction and death. But from these humble beginnings emerged a stream of life which, advancing through ever greater and greater complexity, has culminated in beings whose lives are largely centred in their emotions and ambitions, their aesthetic appreciations, and the religions in which their highest hopes and noblest aspirations lie enshrined.

Although we cannot speak with any certainty, it seems most likely that humanity came into existence in some such way as this. Standing on our microscopic fragment of a grain of sand, we attempt to discover the nature and purpose of the universe which surrounds our home in space and time. Our first impression is something akin to terror. We find the universe terrifying because of its vast meaningless distances, terrifying because of its inconceivably long vistas of time which dwarf human history to the twinkling of an eye, terrifying because of our extreme loneliness, and because of the material insignificance of our home in space—a millionth part of a grain of sand out of all the sea-sand in the world. But above all else, we find the universe terrifying because it appears to be indifferent to life like our own, emotion, ambition and achievement, art and religion all seem equally foreign to its plan. Perhaps indeed we ought to say it appears to be actively hostile to life like our own. For the most part, empty space is so cold that all life in it would be frozen; most of the matter in space is so hot as to make life on it impossible; space is traversed, and astronomical bodies continually bombarded, by radiation of a variety of kinds, much of which is probably inimical to, or even destructive of, life.

Into such a universe we have stumbled, if not exactly by mistake, at least as the result of what may properly be described as an accident. The use of such a word need not imply any surprise that our

earth exists, for accidents will happen, and if the universe goes on for long enough, every conceivable accident is likely to happen in time. It was, I think, Huxley who said that six monkeys, set to strum unintelligently on typewriters for millions of millions of years, would be bound in time to write all the books in the British Museum. If we examined the last page which a particular monkey had typed, and found that it had chanced, in its blind strumming, to type a Shakespeare sonnet, we should rightly regard the occurrence as a remarkable accident, but if we looked through all the millions of pages the monkeys had turned off in untold millions of years, we might be sure of finding a Shakespeare sonnet somewhere amongst them, the product of the blind play of chance. In the same way, millions of millions of stars wandering blindly through space for millions of millions of years are bound to meet with every sort of accident, and so are bound to produce a certain limited number of planetary systems in time. Yet the number of these must be very small in comparison with the total number of stars in the sky.

This rarity of planetary systems is important, because so far as we can see, life of the kind we know on earth could only originate on planets like the earth. It needs suitable physical conditions for its appearance, the most important of which is a temperature at which substances can exist in the liquid state.

The stars themselves are disqualified by being far too hot. We may think of them as a vast collection of fires scattered throughout space, providing warmth in a climate which is at most some four degrees above absolute zero—about 484 degrees of frost on our Fahrenheit scale—and is even lower in the vast stretches of space which lie out beyond the Milky Way. Away from the fires there is this unimaginable cold of hundreds of degrees of frost, close up to them there is a temperature of thousands of degrees, at which all solids melt, all liquids boil.

Life can only exist inside a narrow temperate zone which surrounds each of these fires at a very definite distance. Outside these zones life would be frozen; inside it would be shrivelled up. At a rough computation, these zones within which life is possible, all added together, constitute less than a thousand million millionth part of the whole of space. And even inside them, life must be of very rare occurrence, for it so unusual an accident for suns to throw off planets as our own sun has done, that probably only about one star in 100,000 has a planet revolving round it in the small zone in which life is possible.

Just for this reason it seems incredible that the universe can have been designed primarily to produce life like our own; had it been so, surely we might have expected to find a better proportion between the magnitude of the mechanism and the amount of the product.

At first glance at least, life seems to be an utterly unimportant by-product; we living things are somehow off the main line.

We do not know whether suitable physical conditions are sufficient in themselves to produce life. One school of thought holds that as the earth gradually cooled, it was natural, and indeed almost inevitable, that life should come. Another holds that after one accident had brought the earth into being, a second was necessary to produce life. The material constituents of a living body are perfectly ordinary chemical atoms—carbon, such as we find in soot or lampblack; hydrogen and oxygen, such as we find in water; nitrogen, such as forms the greater part of the atmosphere; and so on. Every kind of atom necessary for life must have existed on the new born earth. At intervals, a group of atoms might happen to arrange themselves in the way in which they are arranged in the living cell. Indeed, given sufficient time, they would be certain to do so, just as certain as the six monkeys would be certain, given sufficient time, to type off a Shakespeare sonnet. But would they then be a living cell? In other words, is a living cell merely a group of ordinary atoms arranged in some non-ordinary way, or is it something more? Is it merely atoms, or is it atoms plus life? Or, to put it in another way, could a sufficiently skilful chemist create life out of the necessary atoms, as a boy can create a machine out of Meccano, *and then make it go*? We do not know the answer. When it comes it will give us some indication whether other worlds in space are inhabited like ours, and so must have the greatest influence on our interpretation of the meaning of life—it may well produce a greater revolution of thought than Galileo's astronomy or Darwin's biology.

We do, however, know that while living matter consists of quite ordinary atoms, it consists in the main of atoms which have a special capacity for coagulating into extraordinary large bunches or "molecules."

Most atoms do not possess this property. The atoms of hydrogen and oxygen, for instance, may combine to form molecules of hydrogen ( $H_2$  or  $H_3$ ), of oxygen or ozone ( $O_2$  or  $O_3$ ), of water ( $H_2O$ ), or of hydrogen peroxide ( $H_2O_2$ ), but none of these compounds contains more than four atoms. The addition of nitrogen does not greatly change the situation; the compounds of hydrogen, oxygen and nitrogen all contain comparatively few atoms. But the further addition of carbon completely transforms the picture; the atoms of hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen *and carbon* combine to form molecules containing hundreds, thousands, and even tens of thousands, of atoms. It is of such molecules that living bodies are mainly formed. Until a century ago it was commonly supposed that some "vital force" was necessary to produce these and the other substances which entered into the composition of the living body. Then Wöhler produced urea

( $\text{CO}(\text{NH}_2)_2$ ), which is a typical animal product, in his laboratory, by the ordinary processes of chemical synthesis, and other constituents of the living body followed in due course. To-day one phenomenon after another which was at one time attributed to "vital force" is being traced to the action of the ordinary processes of physics and chemistry. Although the problem is still far from solution, it is becoming increasingly likely that what specially distinguishes the matter of living bodies is the presence not of a "vital force," but of the quite commonplace element carbon, always in conjunction with other atoms with which it forms exceptionally large molecules.

If this is so, life exists in the universe only because the carbon atom possesses certain exceptional properties. Perhaps carbon is rather noteworthy chemically as forming a sort of transition between the metals and non-metals, but so far nothing in the physical constitution of the carbon atom is known to account for its very special capacity for binding other atoms together. The carbon atom consists of six electrons revolving around the appropriate central nucleus, like six planets revolving round a central sun, it appears to differ from its two nearest neighbours in the table of chemical elements, the atoms of boron and nitrogen, only in having one electron more than the former and one electron fewer than the latter. Yet this slight difference must account in the last resort for all the difference between life and absence of life. No doubt the reason why the six-electron atom possesses these remarkable properties resides somewhere in the ultimate laws of nature, but mathematical physics has not yet fathomed it.

Other similar cases are known to chemistry. The phenomenon of permanent magnetism appears in a tremendous degree in iron, and in a lesser degree in its neighbours, nickel and cobalt. The atoms of these elements have 26, 27 and 28 electrons respectively. The magnetic properties of all other atoms are almost negligible in comparison. Somehow, then, although again mathematical physics has not yet unravelled how, magnetism depends on the peculiar properties of the 26, 27 and 28 electron atoms, especially the first. Radio-activity provides a third instance, being confined, with insignificant exceptions, to atoms having from 83 to 92 electrons, again we do not know why.

Thus chemistry can only tell us to place life in the same category as magnetism and radio-activity. The universe is built so as to operate according to certain laws. As a consequence of these laws, atoms having certain definite numbers of electrons, namely 6, 26 to 28, and 83 to 92, have certain special properties, which shew themselves in the phenomena of life, magnetism and radio-activity respectively. An omnipotent creator, subject to no limitations whatever, would not have been restricted to the laws which prevail in the present universe; he might have elected to build the universe to conform to any one of innumerable other sets of laws. If some other set of laws had been

chosen, other special atoms might have had other special properties associated with them. We cannot say what, but it seems *à priori* unlikely that either radio-activity or magnetism or life would have figured amongst them. Chemistry suggests that, like magnetism and radio-activity, life may merely be an accidental consequence of the special set of laws by which the present universe is governed.

Again the word "accidental" may be challenged. For what if the creator of the universe selected one special set of laws just because they led to the appearance of life? What if this were his way of creating life? So long as we think of the creator as a magnified man-like being, activated by feelings and interests like our own, the challenge cannot be met, except perhaps by the remark that, when such a creator has once been postulated, no argument can add much to what has already been assumed. If, however, we dismiss every trace of anthropomorphism from our minds, there remains no reason for supposing that the present laws were specially selected in order to produce life. They are just as likely, for instance, to have been selected in order to produce magnetism or radio-activity—indeed more likely, since to all appearances physics plays an incomparably greater part in the universe than biology. Viewed from a strictly material standpoint, the utter insignificance of life would seem to go far towards dispelling any idea that it forms a special interest of the Great Architect of the universe.

A trivial analogy may exhibit the situation in a clearer light. An unimaginative sailor, accustomed to tying knots, might think it would be impossible to cross the ocean if tying knots were impossible. Now the capacity for tying knots is limited to space of three dimensions; no knot can be tied in a space of 1, 2, 4, 5 or any other number of dimensions. From this fact our unimaginative sailor might reason that a beneficent creator must have had sailors under his special patronage, and have chosen that space should have three dimensions in order that tying knots and crossing the ocean should be possibilities in the universe he had created—in brief, space was of three dimensions so that there could be sailors. This and the argument outlined above seem to be much on a level, because life as a whole and the tying of knots are pretty much on a level in that neither of them forms more than an utterly insignificant fraction of the total activity of the material universe.

So much for the surprising manner in which, so far as science can at present inform us, we came into being. And our bewilderment is only increased when we attempt to pass from our origins to an understanding of the purpose of our existence, or to foresee the destiny which fate has in store for our race.

Life of the kind we know can only exist under suitable conditions

of light and heat, we only exist ourselves because the earth receives exactly the right amount of radiation from the sun; upset the balance in either direction, of excess or defect, and life must disappear from the earth. And the essence of the situation is that the balance is very easily upset.

Primitive man, living in the temperate zone of the earth, must have watched the ice-age descending on his homes with something like terror, each year the glaciers came further down into the valleys; each winter the sun seemed less able to provide the warmth needed for life. To him, as to us, the universe must have seemed hostile to life.

We of these later days, living in the narrow temperate zone surrounding our sun and peering into the far future, see an ice-age of a different kind threatening us. Just as Tantalus, standing in a lake so deep that he only just escaped drowning, was yet destined to die of thirst, so it is the tragedy of our race that it is probably destined to die of cold, while the greater part of the substance of the universe still remains too hot for life to obtain a footing. The sun, having no extraneous supply of heat, must necessarily emit ever less and less of its life-giving radiation, and, as it does so, the temperate zone of space, within which alone life can exist, must close in around it. To remain a possible abode of life, our earth would need to move in ever nearer and nearer to the dying sun. Yet, science tells us that, so far from its moving inwards, inexorable dynamical laws are even now driving it ever further away from the sun into the outer cold and darkness. And, so far as we can see, they must continue to do so until life is frozen off the earth, unless indeed some celestial collision or cataclysm intervenes to destroy life even earlier by a more speedy death. This prospective fate is not peculiar to our earth, other suns must die like our own, and any life there may be on other planets must meet the same inglorious end.

Physics tells the same story as astronomy. For, independently of all astronomical considerations, the general physical principle known as the second law of thermodynamics predicts that there can be but one end to the universe—a “heat-death” in which the total energy of the universe is uniformly distributed, and all the substance of the universe is at the same temperature. This temperature will be so low as to make life impossible. It matters little by what particular road this final state is reached; all roads lead to Rome, and the end of the journey cannot be other than universal death.

Is this, then, all that life amounts to? To stumble, almost by mistake, into a universe which was clearly not designed for life, and which, to all appearances, is either totally indifferent or definitely hostile to it, to stay clinging on to a fragment of a grain of sand until we are frozen off, to strut our tiny hour on our tiny stage with the

knowledge that our aspirations are all doomed to final frustration, and that our achievements must perish with our race, leaving the universe as though we had never been<sup>2</sup>

Astronomy suggests the question, but it is, I think, mainly to physics that we must turn for an answer. For astronomy can tell us of the present arrangement of the universe, of the vastness and vacuity of space, and of our own insignificance therein; it can even tell us something as to the nature of the changes produced by the passage of time. But we must probe deep into the fundamental nature of things before we can expect to find the answer to our question. And this is not the province of astronomy, rather we shall find that our quest takes us right into the heart of modern physical science.



# CAME THE REVOLUTION

JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH



*"I believe myself to be writing a book on economic theory which will largely revolutionize—not, I suppose, at once but in the course of the next ten years—the way the world thinks about economic problems."*—Letter from J M Keynes to George Bernard Shaw, New Year's Day, 1935

The most influential book on economic and social policy so far in this century, "The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money," by John Maynard Keynes, was published 29 years ago last February in Britain and a few weeks later in the United States. A paperback edition is now available here for the first time, and quite a few people who take advantage of this bargain will be puzzled at the reason for the book's influence. Though comfortably aware of their own intelligence, they will be unable to read it. They will wonder, accordingly, how it persuaded so many other people—not all of whom, certainly—were more penetrating or diligent. This was only one of the remarkable things about this book and the revolution it precipitated.

By common, if not yet quite universal agreement, the Keynesian revolution was one of the great modern accomplishments in social design. It brought Marxism in the advanced countries to a total halt. It led to a level of economic performance that now inspires bitter-end conservatives to panegyrics of unexampled banality. Yet those responsible have had no honors and some opprobrium. For a long while, to be known as an active Keynesian was to invite the wrath

of those who equate social advance with subversion. Those concerned developed a habit of reticence. As a further consequence, the history of the revolution is, perhaps, the worst told story of our era.

It is time that we knew better this part of our history and those who made it, and this is a little of the story. Much of it turns on the almost unique unreadability of "The General Theory" and hence the need for people to translate and propagate its ideas to government officials, students and the public at large. As Messiahs go, Keynes was deeply dependent on his prophets.

"The General Theory" appeared in the sixth year of the Great Depression and the fifty-third of Keynes's life. At the time Keynes, like his great contemporary Churchill, was regarded as too clear-headed and candid to be trusted. Public officials are not always admiring of men who say what the right policy should be. Their frequent need, especially in matters of foreign policy, is for men who will find persuasive reasons for the wrong policy. Keynes had foreseen grave difficulty from the reparations clauses of the Versailles Treaty and had voiced them in "The Economic Consequences of the Peace," a brilliantly polemical volume, which may well have overstated his case and which certainly was unjust to Woodrow Wilson.

Later in the twenties, in another book, he was equally untactful toward those who invited massive unemployment in Britain in order to return sterling to the gold standard at its pre-war parity with the dollar. The man immediately responsible for this effort, a highly orthodox voice in economic matters at the time, was the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, Winston Churchill, and that book was called "The Economic Consequences of Mr. Churchill."

From 1920 to 1940 Keynes was sought out by students and intellectuals in Cambridge and London; was well known in London theater and artistic circles, directed an insurance company, made, and on occasion lost, quite a bit of money; and was an influential journalist. But he wasn't really trusted on public questions. The great public trade union which identifies trustworthiness with conformity kept him outside. Then came the Depression. There was much unemployment, much suffering. Even respectable men went broke. It was necessary, however unpleasant, to listen to the candid men who had something to say. This is the terrible punishment the gods reserve for fair-weather statesmen.

It is a measure of how far the Keynesian revolution has proceeded that the central thesis of "The General Theory" now sounds rather commonplace. Until it appeared, economists, in the classical (or non-socialist) tradition, had assumed that the economy, if left to itself, would find its equilibrium at full employment. Increases or decreases in wages and in interest rates would occur as necessary to bring about this pleasant result. If men were unemployed, their wages would

fall in relation to prices. With lower wages and wider margins, it would be profitable to employ those from whose toil an adequate return could not previously have been made. It followed that steps to keep wages at artificially high levels, such as might result from the ill-considered efforts by unions, would cause unemployment. Such efforts were deemed to be the principal cause of unemployment.

Movements in interest rates played a complementary role by insuring that all income would ultimately be spent. Thus, were people to decide for some reason to increase their savings, the interest rates on the now more abundant supply of loanable funds would fall. This, in turn, would lead to increased investment. The added outlays for investment goods would offset the diminished outlays by the more frugal consumers. In this fashion, changes in consumer spending or in investment decisions were kept from causing any change in total spending that would lead to unemployment.

Keynes argued that neither wage movements nor changes in the rate of interest had, necessarily, any such agreeable effect. He focused attention on the total of purchasing power in the economy—what freshmen are now taught to call aggregate demand. Wage reductions might not increase employment, in conjunction with other changes, they might merely reduce this aggregate demand. And he held that interest was not the price that was paid to people to save but the price they got for exchanging holdings of cash, or its equivalent, their normal preference in assets, for less liquid forms of investment. And it was difficult to reduce interest beyond a certain level. Accordingly, if people sought to save more, this wouldn't necessarily mean lower interest rates and a resulting increase in investment. Instead, the total demand for goods might fall, along with employment and also investment, until savings were brought back into line with investment by the pressure of hardship which had reduced saving in favor of consumption. The economy would find its equilibrium not at full employment but with an unspecified amount of unemployment.

Out of this diagnosis came the remedy. It was to bring aggregate demand back up to the level where all willing workers were employed, and this could be accomplished by supplementing private expenditure with public expenditure. This should be the policy wherever intentions to save exceeded intentions to invest. Since public spending would not perform the offsetting role if there were compensating taxation (which is a form of saving), the public spending should be financed by borrowing—by incurring a deficit. So far as Keynes can be condensed into a few paragraphs, this is it. "The General Theory" is more difficult. There are nearly 400 pages, some of them of fascinating obscurity.

Before the publication of "The General Theory," Keynes had urged his ideas directly on President Roosevelt, most notably in a

famous letter to *The New York Times* on Dec. 31, 1933. "I lay overwhelming emphasis on the increase of national purchasing power resulting from government expenditure which is financed by loans" And he visited F.D.R. in the summer of 1934 to press his case, although the session was no great success, each, during the meeting, seems to have developed some doubts about the general good sense of the other.

In the meantime, two key Washington officials, Marriner Eccles, the exceptionally able Utah banker who was to become head of the Federal Reserve Board, and Lauchlin Currie, a former Harvard instructor who was director of research and later an economic aide to Roosevelt (and later still a prominent victim of McCarthyite persecution), had on their own account reached conclusions similar to those of Keynes as to the proper course of fiscal policy. When "The General Theory" arrived, they took it as confirmation of the course they had previously been urging. Currie, a highly qualified economist and teacher, was also a skilled and influential interpreter of the ideas in the Washington community. Not often have important new ideas on economics entered a government by way of its central bank. Nor should conservatives worry. There is not the slightest indication that it will ever happen again.

Paralleling the work of Keynes in the thirties and rivaling it in importance, though not in fame, was that of Simon Kuznets and a group of young economists and statisticians at the University of Pennsylvania, the National Bureau of Economic Research and the U. S. Department of Commerce. They developed the now familiar concepts of National Income and Gross National Product and their components and made estimates of their amount. Included among the components of National Income and Gross National Product was the saving, investment, aggregate of disposable income and the other magnitudes of which Keynes was talking. As a result, those who were translating his ideas into action knew not only what needed to be done but how much. And many who would never have been persuaded by the Keynesian abstractions were compelled to belief by the concrete figures from Kuznets and his inventive colleagues.

However, the trumpet—if the metaphor is permissible for this particular book—that was sounded in Cambridge, England was heard most clearly in Cambridge, Mass. Harvard was the principal avenue by which Keynes's ideas passed to the United States. Conservatives worry about universities being centers of disquieting innovation. Their worries are surely exaggerated—but it has occurred.

In the late thirties, Harvard had a large community of young economists, most of them held there by the shortage of jobs that Keynes sought to cure. They had the normal confidence of their years in their ability to remake the world and, unlike less fortunate generations, the opportunity. They also had occupational indication of

the need. Massive unemployment persisted year after year. It was degrading to have to continue telling the young that this was merely a temporary departure from the full employment norm, and that one need only obtain the needed wage reductions.

Paul Samuelson of M.I.T., who, almost from the outset, was the acknowledged leader of the younger Keynesian community, has compared the excitement of the young economists, on the arrival of Keynes's book, to that of Keats on first looking into Chapman's Homer. Some will wonder if economists are capable of such refined emotion, but the effect was certainly great. Here was a remedy for the despair that could be seen just beyond the Yard. It did not overthrow the system but saved it. To the nonrevolutionary, it seemed too good to be true. To the occasional revolutionary, it was. The old economics was still taught by day. But in the evening, and almost every evening from 1936 on, almost everyone discussed Keynes.

This might, conceivably, have remained a rather academic discussion. As with the Bible and Marx, obscurity stimulated abstract debate. But in 1938, the practical instincts that economists sometimes suppress with success were catalyzed by the arrival at Harvard from Minnesota of Alvin H. Hansen. He was then about 50, an effective teacher and a popular colleague. But most of all he was a man for whom economic ideas had no standing apart from their use.

The economists of established reputation had not taken to Keynes. Faced with the choice between changing one's mind and proving that there is no need to do so, almost everyone opts for the latter. So it was then. Hansen had an established reputation, and he did change his mind. Though he had been an effective critic of some central propositions in Keynes's "Treatise on Money," an immediately preceding work, and was initially rather cool to "The General Theory," he soon became strongly persuaded of its importance.

He proceeded to expound the ideas in books, articles and lectures and to apply them to the American scene. He persuaded his students and younger colleagues that they should not only understand the ideas but win understanding in others and then go on to get action. Without ever seeking to do so or being quite aware of the fact, he became the leader of a crusade. In the late thirties Hansen's seminar in the new Graduate School of Public Administration was regularly visited by the Washington policymakers. Often the students overflowed into the hall. One felt that it was the most important thing currently happening in the country and this could have been the case.

The officials took Hansen's ideas, and perhaps even more his sense of conviction, back to Washington. In time there was also a strong migration of his younger colleagues and students to the capital. Among numerous others were Richard Gilbert, now a principal architect of Pakistan's economic development, who was a confidant of

Harry Hopkins, Richard Musgrave, now of Princeton, who applied Keynes's and Hansen's ideas to the tax system, Allan Sweezy, now of California Institute of Technology, who went to the Federal Reserve and the W P A., George Jaszi, who went to the Department of Commerce, Griffiths Johnson, who served at the Treasury, National Resources Planning Board and the White House, and Walter Salant, now of the Brookings Institution, who served in several Federal agencies. Keynes himself once wrote admiringly of this group of young Washington disciples.

The discussions that had begun in Cambridge continued through the war years in Washington. One of the leaders, a close friend of Hansen's but not otherwise connected with the Harvard group, was Gerhard Colm of the Bureau of the Budget. Colm, a German refugee who made the transition from a position of influence in Germany to one of influence in the United States in a matter of some five years, played a major role in reducing the Keynesian proposals to workable estimates of costs and quantities. Keynesian policies became central to what was called postwar planning and designs for preventing the re-emergence of massive unemployment.

Meanwhile, others were concerning themselves with a wider audience. Seymour Harris, another of Hansen's colleagues and an early convert to Keynes, became the most prolific exponent of the ideas in the course of becoming one of the most prolific scholars of modern times. He published half a dozen books on Keynes and outlined the ideas in hundreds of letters, speeches, memoranda, Congressional appearances and articles. Professor Samuelson, mentioned above, put the Keynesian ideas into what became (and remains) the most influential textbook on economics since the last great exposition of the classical system by Alfred Marshall. Lloyd Metzler, now of the University of Chicago, applied the Keynesian system to international trade. Lloyd G. Reynolds, at a later stage, gathered a talented group of younger economists at Yale and made that university a major center of discussion of the new trends.

Nor was the Harvard influence confined to the United States. At almost the same time that "The General Theory" arrived in Cambridge, Mass., a young Canadian graduate student named Robert Bryce arrived from Cambridge, England. He had been in Keynes's seminar and had, as a result, a special license to explain what Keynes meant in his more obscure passages. With two or three other Canadian graduate students, Bryce went on to Ottawa and to a succession of senior posts culminating in his present one as Deputy Minister of Finance. Canada was perhaps the first country to commit itself to a firmly Keynesian economic policy.

Meanwhile, with the help of the academic Keynesians, a few businessmen were becoming interested. Two New England industrial-

ists, Henry S. Dennison of the Dennison Manufacturing Company in Framingham and Ralph Flanders of the Jones and Lamson Company of Springfield, Vt. (and later United States Senator from Vermont) hired members of the Harvard group to tutor them in the ideas. Before the war they had endorsed them in a book, in which Lincoln Filene of Boston and Morris E. Leeds of Philadelphia had joined, called "Toward Full Employment." It was only slightly more readable than Keynes. In the later war years, the Committee for Economic Development, led in these matters by Flanders and the late Beardsley Ruml, and again with the help of the academic Keynesians, began explaining the ideas to businessmen.

In Washington during the war years the National Planning Association had been a center for academic discussion of the Keynesian ideas. At the end of the war Hans Christian Sonne, the imaginative and liberal New York banker, began underwriting both N.P.A. and the Keynesian ideas. With the C.E.D., in which Sonne was also influential, N.P.A. became another important instrument for explaining the policy to the larger public. (In the autumn of 1949, in an exercise of unparalleled diplomacy, Sonne gathered a dozen economists of strongly varying views at Princeton and persuaded them to sign a specific endorsement of Keynesian fiscal policies. The agreement was later reported to the Congress in well-publicized hearings by Arthur Smithies of Harvard and Simeon Leland of Northwestern University.)

In 1946, ten years after the publication of "The General Theory," the Employment Act of that year gave the Keynesian system the qualified but still quite explicit support of law. It recognized, as Keynes had urged, that unemployment and insufficient output would respond to positive policies. Not much was said about the specific policies but the responsibility of the Federal Government to act in some fashion was clearly affirmed. The Council of Economic Advisers became, in turn, a platform for expounding the Keynesian view of the economy and it was brought promptly into use. Leon Keyserling, as an original member and later chairman, was a tireless exponent of the ideas. And he saw at an early stage the importance of enlarging them to embrace not only the prevention of depression but the maintenance of an adequate rate of economic expansion. Thus in a decade had the revolution spread.

Those who nurture thoughts of conspiracy and clandestine plots will be saddened to know that this was a revolution without organization. All who participated felt a deep sense of personal responsibility for the ideas; there was a varying but deep urge to persuade. But no one ever responded to plans, orders, instructions, or any force apart from his own convictions. That perhaps was the most interesting single feature of the Keynesian revolution.

Something more was, however, suspected. And there was some

effort at counter-revolution. Nobody could say that he preferred massive unemployment to Keynes. And even men of conservative mood, when they understood what was involved, opted for the policy—some asking only that it be called by some other name. The Committee for Economic Development, coached by Ruml on semantics, never advocated deficits. Rather it spoke well of a budget that was balanced only under conditions of high employment. Those who objected to Keynes were also invariably handicapped by the fact that they hadn't (and couldn't) read the book. It was like attacking the original Kama Sutra for obscenity without being able to read Sanskrit. Still, where social change is involved, there are men who can surmount any handicap.

Appropriately Harvard, not Washington, was the principal object of attention. In the fifties, a group of graduates of mature years banded together in an organization called the Veritas Foundation and produced a volume called "Keynes at Harvard." It found that "Harvard was the launching pad for the Keynesian rocket in America." But then it damaged this not implausible proposition by identifying Keynesianism with socialism, Fabian socialism, Marxism, Communism, Fascism and also literary incest, meaning that one Keynesian always reviewed the works of another Keynesian. More encouragingly, the authors also reported that "Galbraith is being groomed as the new crown prince of Keynesism (sic)." Like so many others in similar situations, the authors sacrificed their chance for credibility by writing not for the public but for those who were paying the bill. The university was unperturbed, the larger public sadly indifferent. The book evidently continues to have some circulation on the more thoughtful fringes of the John Birch Society.

As a somewhat less trivial matter, another and more influential group of graduates pressed for an investigation of the Department of Economics, employing as their instrument the visiting committee that annually reviews the work of the department on behalf of the Governing Boards. The Keynesian revolution belongs to our history; so accordingly does this investigation.

It was conducted by Clarence Randall, then the exceptionally articulate head of the Inland Steel Company, with the support of Sinclair Weeks, a manufacturer, former Senator and tetrarch of the right wing of the Republican Party in Massachusetts. In due course, the committee found that Keynes was, indeed, exerting a baneful influence on the Harvard economic mind and that the department was unbalanced in his favor. As always, there was the handicap that the investigators, with one or two possible exceptions, had not read the book and were otherwise uncertain as to what they attacked. The department, including the members most skeptical of Keynes's analysis—no one accepted all of it and some very little—unanimously rejected



the committee's finding. So, as one of his last official acts before becoming High Commissioner to Germany, did President James Bryant Conant. There was much bad blood.

In ensuing years there was further discussion of the role of Keynes at Harvard and of related issues. But it became increasingly amicable, for the original investigators had been caught up in one of those fascinating and paradoxical developments with which the history of the Keynesian (and doubtless all other) revolutions is replete. Shortly after the committee reached its disturbing conclusion, the Eisenhower Administration came to power.

Mr. Randall became a Presidential assistant and adviser. Mr. Weeks became Secretary of Commerce and almost immediately was preoccupied with the firing of the head of the Bureau of Standards over the question of the efficacy of Glauber's salts as a battery additive. Having staked his public reputation against the nation's scientists and engineers on the issue (as the late Bernard De Voto put it) that a battery could be improved by giving it a laxative, Mr. Weeks could hardly be expected to keep open another front against the economists. But much worse, both he and Mr. Randall were acquiring a heavy contingent liability for the policies of the Eisenhower Administration. And these, it soon developed, had almost as strong a Keynesian coloration as the department at Harvard.

President Eisenhower's first Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers was Arthur F. Burns of Columbia University and the National Bureau of Economic Research. Mr. Burns had credentials as a critic of Keynes. In his introduction to the 1946 annual report of the National Bureau, called "Economic Research and the Keynesian Thinking of Our Times," he had criticized a version of the Keynesian underemployment equilibrium and concluded a little heavily that "the imposing schemes for governmental action that are being bottomed on Keynes's equilibrium theory must be viewed with skepticism." Alvin Hansen had replied rather sharply.

But Burns was (and is) an able economist. If he regarded Keynes with skepticism, he viewed recessions (including ones for which he might be held responsible) with positive antipathy. In his 1955 Economic Report, he said, "Budget policies can help promote the objective of maximum production by wisely allocating resources *first between private and public uses*; second, among various government programs." (Italics added.) Keynes, reading these words carefully, would have strongly applauded. And, indeed, a spokesman for the N.A.M. told the Joint Economic Committee that they pointed "directly toward the planned and eventually the socialized economy."

After the departure of Burns, the Eisenhower Administration incurred a deficit of no less than \$9.4 billions in the national income accounts in the course of overcoming the recession of 1958. This was by

far the largest deficit ever incurred by an American Government in peacetime; it exceeded the *total* peacetime expenditure by F.D.R. in any year up to 1940. No administration before or since has given the economy such a massive dose of Keynesian medicine. With a Republican Administration, guided by men like Mr. Randall and Mr. Weeks, following such policies, the academic Keynesians were no longer vulnerable. Keynes ceased to be a wholly tactful topic of conversation with such critics.

Presidents Kennedy and Johnson have continued what is now commonplace policy. Advised by Walter Heller, a remarkably skillful exponent of Keynes's ideas, they added the new device of the deliberate tax reduction to sustain aggregate demand. And they abandoned, at long last, the doubletalk by which advocates of Keynesian policies combined advocacy of measures to promote full employment and economic growth with promises of a promptly balanced budget. "We have recognized as self-defeating the effort to balance our budget too quickly in an economy operating well below its potential," President Johnson said in his 1965 report.

Now, as noted, Keynesian policies are the new orthodoxy. Economists are everywhere to be seen enjoying their new and pleasantly uncontroversial role. Like their predecessors who averted their eyes from unemployment, many are now able to ignore—often with some slight note of scholarly righteousness—the new problem, which is an atrocious allocation of resources between private wants and public needs, especially those of our cities. (In a sense, the Keynesian success has brought back an older problem of economics, that of resource allocation, in a new form.) And there is the dangerously high dependence on military spending. But these are other matters.

We have yet to pay proper respect to those who pioneered the Keynesian revolution. Everyone now takes pride in the resulting performance of the economy. We should take a little pride in the men who brought it about. It is hardly fitting that they should have been celebrated only by the reactionaries. The debt to the courage and intelligence of Alvin Hansen is especially great. Next only to Keynes, his is the credit for saving what even conservatives still call capitalism.

# SMOKING AND LUNG CANCER

RUTH AND EDWARD BRECHER



## *I. WE ARE LIVING IN AN EPIDEMIC*

### THE AUTOPSY EVIDENCE

In October 1920, a young University of Minnesota pathologist, Dr. Moses Barron, performed an autopsy on a 46-year-old male patient known in the medical records at L. H., and determined that he had died of lung cancer (primary carcinoma of the lung). This seemed curious, for another University of Minnesota pathologist had performed an autopsy two months before on a 42-year-old male patient, and had also found lung cancer. And then still another death from lung cancer was found later in the same month of October.

Dr. Barron had always supposed that cancer of the lung was an exceedingly rare disease. Sometimes a whole year went by without a single case among University of Minnesota autopsies. Three cases in three months aroused Dr. Barron's interest. During the months that followed his interest grew, for additional cases turned up at a rapid rate. Startled, now, Dr. Barron went back over the university's autopsy records and unearthed some facts which he reported to the Minnesota State Medical Society meetings on August 25, 1921.

During the 20-year period from 1899 through 1918, Dr. Barron's study revealed, only four cases of lung cancer had been identified at autopsy by University of Minnesota pathologists. There had been

only one case in 1919. Yet during the single year from July 1, 1920 through June 30, 1921, eight lung cancer cases had turned up. Was this, perhaps, the onset of an epidemic?

Pathologists generally present their statistics in a standard form: number of autopsies, number of cases of one kind, percentage of these cases to all autopsies. Thus a rate of 0.1% means one case in a thousand autopsies, while 1.0% means one case in a hundred. Cast in this form, Dr. Barron's figures revealed the following remarkable increase in lung cancer deaths:

|                   |                                   |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1899 through 1918 | 0.1% (4 deaths in 3399 autopsies) |
| 1919 to July 1921 | 0.9% (9 deaths in 1003 autopsies) |

The conclusion seemed inescapable, and Dr. Barron cautiously drew it in 1921. "This disease," he wrote, "is apparently increasing in frequency, especially during the past few years." And he was right. For the period 1949 through 1952 the University of Minnesota rate reached 3.2% (264 lung cancer deaths in 8332 autopsies).

In various other parts of the world, autopsy records were telling substantially the same story. A rise was quite generally apparent, earlier in some places, later in others, often at about the same time as Dr. Barron's findings. Here, for example, are lung cancer rates drawn at five-year intervals from the autopsy records of the Charité Hospital in Berlin

|      |      |      |      |
|------|------|------|------|
| 1908 | 0.3% | 1918 | 0.6% |
| 1913 | 0.4% | 1923 | 1.5% |

And here are the figures, for five-year periods, from Zurich, Switzerland:

|           |      |           |      |
|-----------|------|-----------|------|
| 1906-1910 | 0.1% | 1916-1920 | 0.7% |
| 1911-1915 | 0.5% | 1921-1925 | 2.1% |

All of the autopsy records, it is true, did not fit precisely this pattern. At the Royal Infirmary in Manchester, England, for example, the increase which Dr. Barron had noted in 1921 was visible much earlier. In Reykjavik, Iceland, lung cancer rates at autopsy remained low as late as 1948. But by and large the trend was irregularly upward beginning about 1920.

An autopsy series of particular value comes from Presbyterian Hospital in New York City, where Dr. David M. Spain reviewed the autopsy findings for the 45-year period from 1912 through 1956. The diagnosis of lung cancer depends primarily on the microscopic examination of cells taken from the lungs. Presbyterian Hospital had maintained microphotographs of cancer cells for its earlier autopsies and

had actually preserved the cells themselves in microscope slides for the later autopsies, so that Dr. Spain was able to review the entire series personally and confirm or correct the diagnoses. His figures showed the following increase in lung cancer deaths:

|           |      |                                |
|-----------|------|--------------------------------|
| 1912-1921 | 0.6% | (6 deaths in 992 autopsies)    |
| 1922-1931 | 1.3% | (21 deaths in 1649 autopsies)  |
| 1932-1941 | 2.8% | (83 deaths in 2950 autopsies)  |
| 1942-1945 | 3.4% | (49 deaths in 1449 autopsies)  |
| 1947-1956 | 3.7% | (120 deaths in 3250 autopsies) |

What was happening at Presbyterian Hospital was also happening at the University of Michigan, where 14,000 autopsies were performed from 1895 through 1954. As at Presbyterian Hospital, materials from the earlier University of Michigan autopsies were preserved and reviewed from time to time to confirm the lung cancer diagnoses and to make sure that cases diagnosable as lung cancer by modern standards had not been missed during the earlier years. The figures show a remarkably steady rise in lung cancer incidence for each thousand autopsies in the series.

| CASES OF LUNG CANCER |      |               |      |
|----------------------|------|---------------|------|
| 1st thousand         | 0.2% | 8th thousand  | 2.2% |
| 2nd thousand         | 0.8  | 9th thousand  | 2.4  |
| 3rd thousand         | 1.0  | 10th thousand | 2.6  |
| 4th thousand         | 1.4  | 11th thousand | 3.1  |
| 5th thousand         | 1.8  | 12th thousand | 3.9  |
| 6th thousand         | 2.1  | 13th thousand | 3.4  |
| 7th thousand         | 2.2  | 14th thousand | 4.2  |

The rate thus rose from 0.2% to 4.2% during the sixty-year period from 1895 through 1954—more than a twenty-fold increase. (Comparable figures for University of Michigan autopsies since 1954 are not available.)

#### THE DEATH RATE EVIDENCE

The autopsy figures presented above are all subject to a major shortcoming. They include for the most part only patients who died in hospitals and whose relatives consented to an autopsy. Evidence concerning so highly selected a group cannot be uncritically applied to the population as a whole. Suppose, for example, that during the early years of a series most lung cancer patients died at home: and that as time passed a larger and larger proportion died in hospitals and came to autopsy. This trend of events might have produced an *apparent* increase in lung cancer of the kind described above without any *actual* increase in the disease. To rule out this and other possibi-

ties of this kind, the causes of deaths in a total population rather than an autopsied population must be considered. For this purpose death certificates offer the broadest possible evidence.

The death certificate data fully confirm the data from autopsies.

In the United States, for example, only 371 deaths were attributed to lung cancer in 1914. This number rose to 36,420 in 1960. Figure 1 shows the increase in graph form year by year from 1930 on.

This increase in number of deaths suggests the reason for the increasing public health concern with lung cancer. But the raw figures require corrections of several types. The U. S. population, for example, increased rapidly between 1914 and 1960; and the proportion of the population covered by uniform death certificate reporting also increased. Further, lung cancer is a disease of middle age and old age, and the proportion of the population living into the lung cancer age brackets increased considerably. Finally, the figures for the total population mask the marked differences between what was happening to lung cancer in men and in women. Figure 2, accordingly, makes allowances for these factors.

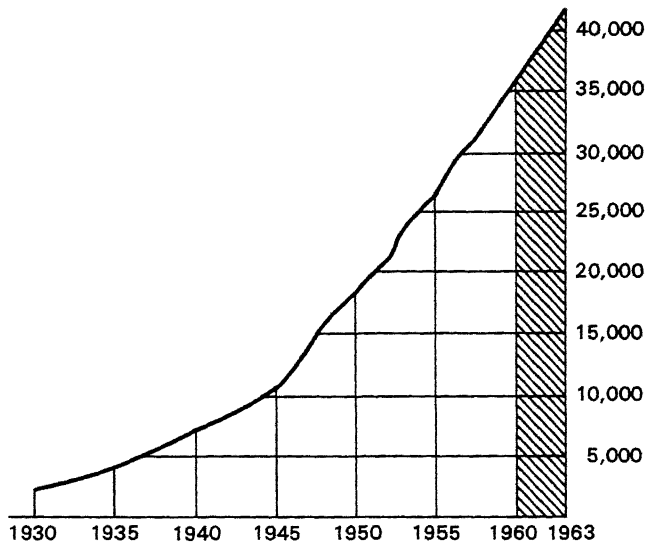
This epidemic, moreover, has not been limited to the United States. Indeed, the rise among men in Scotland, England, Wales, Finland, and some other countries has been even steeper.

#### COMBINING THE EVIDENCE

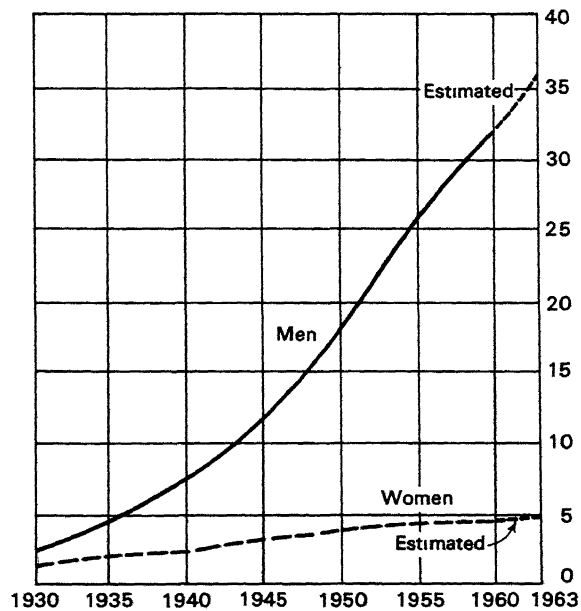
Just as the autopsy evidence may be doubted on the ground that the sample of deaths coming to autopsy is a selected and untypical sample, so it is possible to doubt the death certificate evidence on the ground that physicians who fill out the certificates are not always sure of what *really* caused the death—and, in some cases, they may be merely guessing. Neither kind of evidence by itself proves that there was an actual increase in lung cancer deaths.

But when the autopsy evidence is combined with the death certificate evidence, the proof emerges very clearly. The figures based on autopsies performed by skilled pathologists at the world's great medical centers cannot be dismissed as mere guesswork; and the lung cancer death rates covering substantially all of the deaths in a dozen different countries cannot be dismissed as due to biased sampling. The criticisms of each body of evidence are answered by the fact that the other body of evidence tells the same story.

This theme of combining the evidence will reappear throughout this discussion. Only rarely can a single study, observation, or experiment stand by itself. Each of the studies we will report is subject to qualifications and limitations. But the points not covered in one study are soon covered by another study. Thus a wall of evidence is gradually erected.



**Figure 1.** Deaths attributed to lung cancer in the U. S from 1930 to 1963 (the figures for 1960 to 1963 are estimated). Lung cancer is one of the few diseases to have shown an increased death rate over this period



**Figure 2.** Deaths attributed to lung cancer per 100,000 men and women in the U. S from 1930 to 1963 (the figures for 1960 to 1963 are estimated) The figures are weighted to allow for the gradual aging of the population

During the early years of the lung cancer epidemic it was sometimes argued that the apparent increase in the disease might result from improved methods of diagnosis among physicians filling out death certificates, and from a greater alertness to lung cancer among pathologists performing autopsies.

No doubt a part of the apparent increase is due to such factors, but many separate lines of evidence indicate that most of the apparent increase is in fact a true increase

*First*, the simple bulk of the increase makes improved diagnosis an inadequate explanation. Physicians and university pathologists prior to the 1920's might conceivably have missed one-half of the lung cancer deaths though that is most unlikely. But it is utterly inconceivable that they should have missed nine lung cancer deaths out of every 10 or 19 out of every 20

*Second*, improvements in diagnosis also occurred with respect to such forms of cancer as stomach cancer. Yet no comparable rise in reported stomach cancer rates generally, or in cancer at other internal sites, has occurred

*Third*, lung cancer is as easy to diagnose among women as among men. The proportion of the increase due to improved diagnosis must therefore make its appearance in the women's rate as well as the men's rate. Even if the entire increase in lung cancer among women shown in Figure 2 were attributed to improved diagnosis—a most dubious assumption—the far more rapid increase among men would remain unexplained.

*Fourth*, the attempt to explain away the increase as merely the result of improved diagnosis comes to grief on the rock of the well established fact that, to this very day, cancer of the lung remains a rare disease among certain groups

Among Seventh Day Adventists, for example, the disease is almost unknown, and the few cases which do occur are primarily in recent converts. Lung cancer is as easy to diagnose in Seventh Day Adventists as in Baptists, Methodists, Catholics, Jews, or atheists. If the lung cancer increase were merely the result of improved diagnosis, the Seventh Day Adventist rate would be expected to rise with the other rates. (We shall have more to say about this fortunate group later on.)

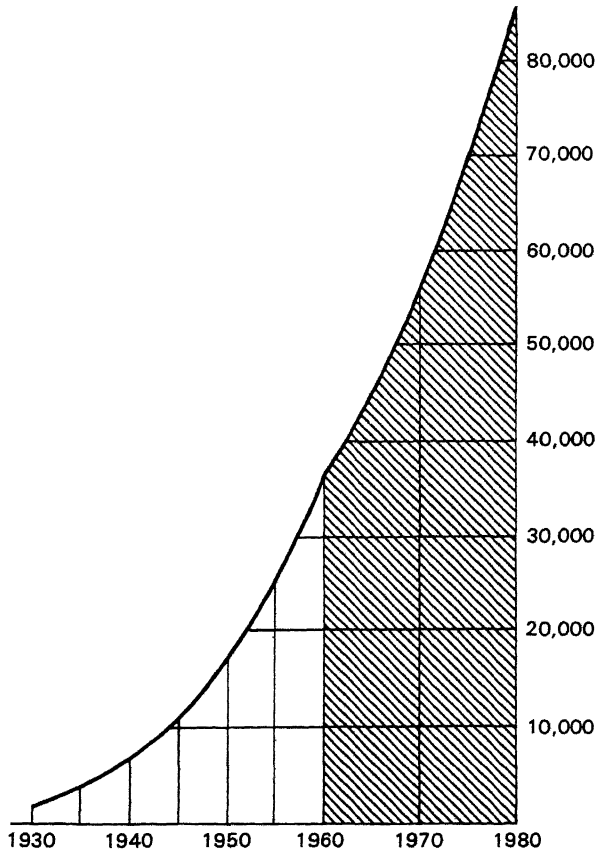
*Finally*, there is the strange but unchallenged fact that lung cancer remains today a rare disease among men and women who do not smoke and who never have smoked. It is also relatively uncommon among men who smoke cigars or pipes or both, but not cigarettes. Improved diagnosis, to the extent that it has affected the statistics through the years, would have produced a rise among non-smokers, pipe smokers, and cigar smokers as well as among cigarette smokers. The excess rise among cigarette smokers cannot be explained by improved diagnosis.



## THE INESCAPABLE CONCLUSION

The conclusion is inescapable, and even spokesmen for the cigarette industry today rarely seek to escape it: We are living in the midst of a major lung cancer epidemic. This epidemic hit men first and hardest, but has affected women as well. It is occurring not only in the United States but in a number of other countries. It cannot be explained away by such factors as improved diagnosis. And, as Figure 3 indicates, there is reason to believe that the worst is yet to come.

The American Public Health Association has called attention to this black future in a single dramatic statistic. If present trends continue, the Association reported in 1959, "lung cancer will claim the lives of more than 1,000,000 present school children in this country before they reach the age of 70 years"



**Figure 3.** The increase in lung cancer deaths for the period 1930-1960 (as shown in Figure 1) is here projected to 1980, assuming that present trends continue.

## II. THE STATISTICAL EVIDENCE

### OCCUPATION EXPOSURE STUDIES

More than 400 years ago, in 1556 A.D., George Agricola published what may well be the first report on lung cancer, and the first explanation of it. Agricola was the town physician in Joachimsthal in Bohemia (now Jáchymov in Czechoslovakia), and his classic treatise on mining, *De Re Metallica*, called attention to a disease of the lungs shockingly prevalent then and later among workers in the Joachimsthal mines. Here is his description, translated from the Latin by Dr. (later President) and Mrs. Herbert C. Hoover:

Some mines are so dry that they are entirely devoid of water, and this dryness causes the workmen . . . harm, for the dust which is stirred and beaten up by digging penetrates into the windpipe and lungs, and produces difficulty in breathing . . . If the dust has corrosive qualities, it eats away the lungs, and implants consumption in the bodies; hence in the mines of the Carpathian Mountains women are found who have married seven husbands, all of whom this terrible consumption has carried off to a premature death

The mine dust so vividly described by Agricola contained a number of substances which might explain the lung cancer, including radium and uranium. Indeed, it was from Joachimsthal pitchblende that the Curies in 1898 isolated radium. Other suspected agents in the dust were arsenic, nickel, and cobalt. Studies published in the 1930's indicated that, as is often the case with cancer, the agent required many years before death from lung cancer actually took place. From 13 to 23 years elapsed between the time a boy or young man went to work in the mines and the time of his death from lung cancer.

Among other occupational groups, too, very high lung cancer rates have been reported. One such group was composed of employees of six American chromate plants during the years 1940-48. Their lung cancer death rate was 29 times as high as the rate for U. S. males generally.

Among nickel workers in South Wales from 1948 to 1956, the lung cancer rate was five times as high as among workers in other occupations.

And among workers employed in the dusty areas of an English asbestos plant for 15 years or more, the lung cancer rate was 30 times greater than for males in England and Wales generally.

### THE CORRELATION STUDIES

Findings such as these among workers exposed to specific dusts or pollutants provide valuable clues to the more general lung cancer

mystery. They indicate that lung cancer can follow inhalation of damaging substances, and that many years of exposure may precede death. In seeking to explain the general increase in lung cancer after 1920, accordingly, the thoughts of researchers often turned to the Joachimsthal miners, and some substance was sought which fitted the following descriptions and which might therefore explain the lung cancer epidemic

1. It must enter the human lung
2. It must have come into common use in countries like England and U. S. about 1900.
3. It must be in very common use in countries where lung cancer rates are high but less common in countries where lung cancer rates are low.
4. It must enter men's lungs more than women's lungs.

An obvious candidate for this role is cigarette smoke, and many studies have confirmed the extent to which it meets the description of a substance entering the lungs which has increased along with lung cancer—allowing a lag of 15 to 30 years between the smoking rate and the lung cancer rate. Most striking are recent figures from Iceland, where lung cancer remained a rare disease and cigarette smoking a relatively unpopular habit as recently as 1940. Since then, cigarette smoking has become increasingly popular—and lung cancer increasingly common. Here are the figures from the University of Iceland Department of Pathology, showing the proportion of autopsies in which death from lung cancer was found.

|         |      |                               |
|---------|------|-------------------------------|
| 1932-40 | 0.5% | (3 deaths in 644 autopsies)   |
| 1941-45 | 0.6% | (3 deaths in 478 autopsies)   |
| 1946-50 | 1.3% | (8 deaths in 636 autopsies)   |
| 1951-55 | 2.2% | (17 deaths in 781 autopsies)  |
| 1956-60 | 2.6% | (31 deaths in 1174 autopsies) |

Iceland, in short, took up cigarette smoking later than other countries—and the lung cancer epidemic hit Iceland later than it hit other countries.

The Icelandic increase cannot be attributed to air pollution, Dr. Niels Dungal of the University of Iceland points out, for at least since 1943 Reykjavik (where most of the deaths occurred) has had the purest air in Europe. A municipal heating system based on hot springs near the city has replaced both coal and oil for heating purposes.

Such data—and many additional correlations between cigarette consumption in one year and lung cancer deaths in a later year—do not, of course, “prove” that cigarette smoking is the “cause” of lung cancer. They merely indicate that smoking is a likely suspect. Other substances—for example, air pollution in general, or industrial wastes and products of industrial and domestic combustion discharged into

the air through smokestacks and chimneys, or particles released into the air by the wearing of rubber tires on paved surfaces—might also fit the requirements of the role. Yet a little thought will show that the correlations between cigarette smoking and lung cancer deaths do have considerable value as evidence. For no equally impressive correlations exist for any other factor.

#### THE RETROSPECTIVE STUDIES

Fortunately we do not have to rely on mere correlations to decide the issue. Through the years researchers have developed a type of investigation known as the “retrospective study,” and at least 27 such studies of lung cancer have been published.

These retrospective studies all consist essentially in starting with a group of lung cancer victims and asking this question:

What has occurred in their past histories which might explain their lung cancers?

One early answer came from an English physician, Dr. F. E. Tylecote. He reported in the British medical journal *Lancet* in 1927 that, in almost every case of lung cancer he had seen or known about, the patient was a regular smoker, usually of cigarettes.

This kind of evidence, of course, leaves much to be desired. How many cases of lung cancer had Dr. Tylecote seen or known about? How many exceptions were there to his statement that “almost every case” was a regular smoker? And what did he mean by “regular smoker”?

A somewhat more specific answer came from Drs. Aaron Arkin and David H. Wagner of Chicago. They reported in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* for February 22, 1936, that among 135 men with lung cancer they had examined, 90% were “chronic smokers.” This kind of evidence is significant. If someone were to report, for example, that among patients with a particular kind of blood disease 90% were chronic users of a certain drug, the Food and Drug Administration would no doubt be urged to launch an immediate investigation. But findings like those of Arkin and Wagner, while suggestive, still hardly constitute proof for example, they do not rule out the possibility that 90% of the men of the same age, occupation, and residence in Chicago who did *not* die of lung cancer might also be “chronic smokers.”

The next step, accordingly, was to launch controlled retrospective studies, in which each patient with lung cancer was matched as closely as possible with a control who did not have lung cancer, in order to determine significant differences between the lung cancer victims and the controls.

One early controlled study was reported by Dr. F. H. Muller from

Cologne, Germany, in 1939. Muller compared 80 male lung cancer patients with 80 healthy men and found much more smoking among the cancer patients.

Such a study, of course, is subject to the objection that it all depends on how you select your controls. Later studies, accordingly, have used great care in matching each lung cancer patient with a similar control case—usually a hospital patient with some other disease—of the same age, sex, residential area, occupational class, and so on.

An excellent example of such a critically controlled study was reported from England in 1950 by Drs. W. Richard Doll and A. Bradford Hill. They began with 1465 lung cancer patients, mostly from London hospitals. Each of these patients was matched by age and sex with a hospital patient who did not have lung cancer. Some of the control patients had cancer at other sites; some had diseases other than cancer. Here are two of the findings:

Only one male lung cancer patient in 200 was a non-smoker, as compared with one in 22 among the controls.

One male lung cancer smoker in four was a "heavy smoker" (carefully defined as a man smoking more than 25 cigarettes a day or the equivalent in pipe tobacco) as compared with only one in eight among the controls.

Critics of these retrospective studies might suspect that the interviewers who ask patients about their smoking habits could bias the results by consciously or unconsciously "leading" lung cancer patients to exaggerate their smoking, and not leading the control patients to the same extent. Doll and Hill were able to exclude this possibility. In some cases, the patients were interviewed at a time when it was supposed that they had lung cancer, but the diagnosis later proved to be erroneous. If the interviewers were leading the lung cancer patients to exaggerate their smoking habits, there would have been an excess proportion of heavy smokers in this group. No such excess was found.

The Doll-Hill study might also be criticized on the ground that the control group was itself composed of hospitalized patients and might therefore not be typical of the population as a whole. So, as an added precaution, Doll and Hill made a further study of a random sample of the English population as a whole. Far from exaggerating the relationship between lung cancer and smoking, this additional study revealed, the use of hospital patients as controls actually minimized the relationship, for there were more smokers and more heavy smokers in the hospital control group than in the population as a whole.

A study of the same kind, made in the United States by Drs. Ernest L. Wynder and Evarts A. Graham, then at the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, was also published in

1950. They also took numerous precautions to avoid bias. In one part of their study, for example, their interviewers talked with all the patients coming to a chest clinic, without knowing whether the patients had lung cancer or some other chest condition. The diagnosis was not recorded until after smoking habits had been ascertained. Using these and other precautions, Drs. Wynder and Graham were able to settle on a number of impressive conclusions, including the following

Excessive and prolonged use of tobacco, especially cigarettes, seems to be an important factor in the induction of bronchogenic carcinoma [see page 278]

Among 605 men with bronchogenic carcinoma . . . 96.5% were moderately heavy to chain smokers for many years, compared with 73.7% among the general male population without cancer. Among the cancer groups 51.2% were excessive or chain smokers compared with 19.1% in the general hospital group without cancer

The occurrence of carcinoma of the lung in a male non-smoker or minimal smoker is a rare phenomenon

94.1% of male patients with cancer of the lungs were found to be cigarette smokers, 4.0% pipe smokers, and 3.5% cigar smokers

#### THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST STUDY

These and other retrospective studies of this kind, which start with lung cancer victims and work backward, are subject to a common flaw. They do not foreclose the possibility that some other factor associated with smoking—call it the X-factor—may be the “cause” of the lung cancer.

An example will illustrate this possibility. Heavy cigarette smokers are more likely than non-smokers to develop cirrhosis of the liver. But this does not mean that heavy cigarette smoking “causes” cirrhosis of the liver. Rather the relationship seems to involve these links:

1. Most heavy drinkers are also heavy smokers
2. Many heavy drinkers suffer from dietary deficiencies.
3. These dietary deficiencies, in all probability, lead in turn to cirrhosis of the liver.

Heavy drinking, in short, is in all probability the X-factor by which heavy cigarette smoking is linked with dietary deficiencies and thus with cirrhosis of the liver.

It is hard to conceive of such a specific X-factor linking smoking with lung cancer, however—and the inherent implausibility of such a factor has been dramatically illustrated in a remarkable study made by Drs. Wynder, Frank R. Lemon, and Irwin J. Bross at Seventh Day Adventist hospitals throughout the country.

These Seventh Day Adventist hospitals are good hospitals, staffed with competent pathologists and diagnosticians. They treat both Seventh Day Adventists and patients of other creeds, or of no creed whatever. The study sought essentially an answer to this question—

*Is there a lung cancer difference between Seventh Day Adventists and others treated in the same hospitals?*

The answer, as in other retrospective studies reviewed above, was clear-cut. Patients at these hospitals who were not Seventh Day Adventists had just about the lung cancer rates to be expected. Among Seventh Day Adventists, in contrast, lung cancer was almost totally unknown. Only two cases were diagnosed among many hundreds of patients dying of other diseases. And both of these cases, interestingly enough, were among recent converts to Seventh Day Adventism.

Now let us consider the light this finding throws on the X-factor. If such a factor exists, it must (of course) have the two characteristics already noted. It must be associated with cigarette smoking (as distinct from cigar or pipe smoking), and it must cause lung cancer. In addition, we can affirm on the basis of the Seventh Day Adventist findings the X-factor must be present in Catholics, Methodists, Baptists, Jews, and atheists—but Seventh Day Adventists (except recent converts) must somehow be resistant to or lacking in it altogether!

There is, of course, a much simpler and more plausible explanation. *Seventh Day Adventists do not smoke.*

This simpler theory is buttressed by the fact that both of the converts to Seventh Day Adventism who developed lung cancer smoked a pack a day or more for 20 years or longer prior to their conversion.

Once again, no single retrospective study by itself can prove a significant association between cigarette smoking and lung cancer. Each study is subject to qualifications. But when the 27 or more retrospective studies are considered in combination, their joint value is very high.

The studies were made independently, by different scientists or groups. At least one study was launched with the expectation of *disproving* an association. Parallel results have been reported from the U. S., England, Germany, Japan, The Netherlands, Denmark, and other countries. The association was shown to hold for women as well as men, and for various age groups considered separately.

#### THE NEGATIVE EVIDENCE

Let us next consider controlled retrospective studies which show the absence of an association between cigarette smoking and lung cancer. This can be briefly done. *There are no such studies.*

No one has ever matched lung cancer victims with comparable

controls and reported that the lung cancer victims smoked less than the controls, or smoked only to the same extent, or smoked only a little bit more

If a single population could be found—urban or rural, domestic or foreign, red, yellow, black or white—in which an increase in lung cancer is *not* linked with heavy, prolonged cigarette smoking, the case against the cigarette would concededly be weakened. But no such population has been reported.

Some widely publicized reports, it is true, may seem at first glance to provide negative evidence casting doubt on the cigarette-lung-cancer theory. Let us consider three

Dr. Geoffrey Dean noted in 1959 that white males born in South Africa were among the world's heaviest smokers, yet they had a lower lung cancer rate than male immigrants to South Africa from Britain. This seemed to suggest that something in the British environment, perhaps air pollution, was more important than smoking.

Dr. D. F. Eastcott reported similarly from New Zealand in 1956 that immigrants from Britain to New Zealand smoked no more than native white New Zealanders but had a higher lung cancer rate.

Finally, Dr. Jacob Cohen of New York University (an American Tobacco Company consultant) and Robert K. Heimann of the American Tobacco Company alleged in 1962 that employees of the cigarette division of the American Tobacco Company smoked very heavily, yet had no deaths from primary lung cancer and were very healthy in other respects. Dr. Cohen and Mr. Heimann described both their own figures and the South African and New Zealand figures as "negative findings" with respect to the cigarette-lung-cancer hypothesis.

But none of these studies provided a matched comparison between smokers and non-smokers alike in other respects. Instead, all *three* studies lumped smokers and non-smokers together, and thus actually concealed the smoking effect.

The danger of relying on such uncontrolled studies can be dramatically illustrated. At about the same time that Dr. Cohen and Mr. Heimann published their American Tobacco Company study with its review of the South African and New Zealand studies, Dr. Dean published additional figures from South Africa in the *British Medical Journal*. The additional report contained detailed comparisons of smokers and non-smokers missing from the earlier study. With this missing data supplied, the picture turned out to be very different.

Cigarette smokers, the new study revealed, had a much higher lung cancer death rate than non-smokers. Further, this variation of lung cancer rates with smoking habits appeared both among men born in South Africa and among the immigrants from Britain. Again, the amount of lung cancer turned out to vary directly with the *amount* of smoking, native-born South African males who did not





**Figure 4.** CU's tests of cigarettes over past years have been made with the apparatus shown above. What CU has learned has been that brands vary widely and change frequently with respect to tars and nicotine in the smoke taken in by the smoker. It is probably some of the tars which do the damage so far as lung cancer is concerned. But in this area of precisely *how* the smoking-lung cancer link is forged, more is to be learned than is known.

smoke, for example, had a lung cancer death rate of 8 per 100,000 as compared with a rate of 156 among native-born South African males who smoked 50 or more cigarettes daily. And finally, the significance of the smoking factor turned out to dwarf the significance of the immigration factor which had loomed so large when it was presented in the earlier paper without the smoking-non-smoking comparison. Far from casting doubt on the cigarette-lung-cancer hypothesis, the complete South African figures with the smoking-non-smoking comparison included turned out to be one of the most impressive sets of statistics ever compiled in support of the cigarette-lung-cancer theory.

Figures for New Zealand and for employees of the American

Tobacco Company showing smokers and non-smokers separately have not to date been published.

#### THE PROSPECTIVE STUDIES

Like any other single kind of evidence, the retrospective studies we have been reviewing are not by themselves conclusive. But they do not stand alone. Even more impressive evidence of the cigarette-lung cancer relationship has been accumulated in a series of prospective studies.

Such studies essentially start with a group of presumably healthy smokers and a second group of presumably healthy non-smokers, and follow them through a subsequent period of months or years to find out what happens to both groups.

One important prospective study was conducted in England for the Medical Research Council by Drs. Doll and Hill, whose retrospective study has already been discussed. They began by sending a questionnaire on personal smoking habits to 60,000 British physicians aged 35 or over. Sufficient data to classify the physicians by their smoking habits were received from 40,000. After following the 40,000 physicians for the next 4½ years, Drs. Doll and Hill were able to draw the following conclusions:

- Mild smokers are seven times as likely to die of lung cancer as non-smokers
- Moderate smokers are 12 times as likely to die of lung cancer as non-smokers.
- Immoderate smokers are 24 times as likely to die of lung cancer as non-smokers.

Because this study was limited to a well-defined population—British physicians over 35 in 1951—it had certain advantages. For example, the death certificates of *all* physicians who died could be checked, to make sure that those participating in the study were typical of the whole group. The study was on a relatively small scale, however, and it might be argued that physicians are not necessarily typical of the general population. The American prospective study by Drs. E. Cuyler Hammond and Daniel Horn for the American Cancer Society is subject to neither of these two possible qualifications.

These investigators started by training a group of 22,000 Cancer Society volunteers to get smoking questionnaires from their friends. The volunteers secured usable questionnaires from nearly 190,000 white males aged 50 to 69 who seemed well when questioned. During the next 44 months 187,783 of these men were followed, and 11,870 deaths among them were reported.

The results were so voluminous that only a few can be presented

here. The lung cancer death rate per 100,000 men per year for non-smokers was 12.8, indicating that lung cancer is still a rare disease among non-smokers. Among those who smoked from  $\frac{1}{2}$  to one pack a day the comparable rate was 107.8. Among those who smoked from one to two packs a day the rate was 229.2. And among those who smoked more than two packs a day it was 264.2. These findings expressed as ratios are given on page 245.

The prospective study by Dr. Harold F. Dorn was very closely in line with the studies of Drs. Doll and Hill and of Drs. Hammond and Horn. He followed nearly 200,000 veterans holding government life insurance policies for a period of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  years, and reported that in this group cigarette smokers generally were nearly ten times as likely to die of lung cancer as non-smokers—and that men smoking more than a pack a day were some 16 times as likely to die of lung cancer as non-smokers.

Dr. Lester Breslow of the California State Health Department and his associates have published another prospective study which is of particular interest because it was not designed primarily to check on smoking and lung cancer. On the contrary, it was concerned with employees engaged in types of work which (it was suspected) might lead to high lung cancer rates. The Breslow group did find that some occupational groups had higher lung cancer rates than other groups, but it was the groups which smoked most which had the highest rates. The effect of smoking on the lung cancer death rate was so intense that it proved impossible to determine whether or not occupational factors were also at work.

A different, non-prospective kind of study has been pioneered by William Haenszel and his National Cancer Institute associates. They determined "standard lung cancer mortality rates" for men of various ages in various parts of the country, native born and foreign born. Among their impressive findings was the fact that regular cigarette smokers were far more likely to die of lung cancer than non-smokers *in every group they checked*. Here are some examples:

|  | Standard lung<br>cancer mortality<br>ratios for men<br>who are not regular<br>cigarette smokers | Standard lung<br>cancer mortality<br>ratios for men<br>who are regular<br>cigarette smokers |
|--|---|---|
| Foreign born                                 | 61  | 277   |
| Native born                                  | 26  | 180   |
| Born and currently<br>living on farm         | 11  | 111   |
| Born and currently<br>living in a large city | 34  | 198   |

Clearly there are differences between native-born and foreign-born populations, and between city and farm residents; but the differences between regular cigarette smokers and others dwarf all other variations.

The most recent of the prospective studies, conducted again by Dr. Hammond for the American Cancer Society, is also the largest and broadest. Launched in 1959, it covers more than a million men and women in more than a thousand counties, and it is collecting far more information about each participant than earlier studies did. It is concerned not only with smoking and cancer, but with many other health problems as well. Preliminary findings are in line with the earlier studies, but go beyond them in significant respects. For example, lung cancer turns out to be closely associated with the inhaling of cigarette smoke, indeed, inhaling may prove to be an even more important factor in lung cancer than the number of cigarettes smoked, a point we will discuss at more length further on.

### III. THE EXPERIMENTAL EVIDENCE

#### STATISTICS AND PLAUSIBILITY

Efforts have occasionally been made to discredit the kinds of evidence we have been describing on the ground that they are "merely statistical." This kind of criticism overlooks the fact that some of the central findings of science are supported solely by statistical evidence. The death of a smoker from lung cancer is not a "merely statistical" death, it is a real death. Grouping a dead smoker with large numbers of other smokers who have died of lung cancer does not alter the death or make it "merely statistical"; it simply collects the evidence from many thousands of individual cases into a coherent pattern.

The argument against placing too much reliance on "merely statistical" evidence has perhaps been expressed most forcefully by a scientist who is himself a statistician—Dr. Jacob Yerushalmy of the University of California. He likes to tell the story of a study he made on cigarette smoking during pregnancy. His study revealed, as several others have also revealed, that women who smoke during pregnancy give birth to babies who weigh less on the average than the babies of women who do not smoke. Dr. Yerushalmy's study went further, however; it showed that the weight of the babies was also lower than average among women whose *husbands* smoked, whatever the mother's own smoking habits!

Since the relationship between a woman's smoking during pregnancy and the weight of her baby is a plausible one in terms of every-

thing known about the physiology of smoking, pregnancy, and birth weight, it is easily accepted. But a change in an infant's birth weight due to the smoking habits of its mother's husband seems unlikely enough to call for some other explanation of the apparent relationship. Let us not rely on a "merely statistical" relationship, Dr. Yerushalmy's story suggests, unless it can also be shown that the relationship is a reasonable one.

Such warnings apply with very great force, of course, to findings based on any single statistical study. They may maintain considerable force when applied to groups of statistical studies which pursue a single statistical method—the whole group of retrospective studies described above, for example. But they lose much of their effectiveness when used to attack findings confirmed by divergent statistical techniques, such as the combined correlation data, retrospective data, and prospective data reviewed above.

Still, Dr. Yerushalmy's story does have significance in connection with the smoking-lung cancer relationship. It suggests that the overwhelming statistical evidence we have reviewed would take on an even greater probative force if it could be shown through experimental and pathological studies that a relationship between smoking and lung cancer is, in fact, inherently plausible as well as statistically evident.

Evidence bearing on the inherent plausibility of the smoking-lung cancer hypothesis will accordingly be reviewed here. But first it is necessary to recall a few underlying facts about cancer in general, starting with some basic ones, thus:

The human body, like plants and animals generally, is composed of myriads of cells. Each cell divides from time to time, giving rise to two daughter cells. Typically the daughter cells precisely resemble the parent cell.

Each cell has a nucleus which can be seen through the microscope. In the nuclei are chromosomes, which can also be seen through the microscope and mapped. The chromosomes are composed of DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid). This substance carries a "genetic code." The two daughter cells generally follow the same pattern as their parent cell because they contain the same DNA in the chromosomes of their nuclei and thus receive the same "message" in the genetic code.

#### THE INHERENT NATURE OF CANCER

Cancer cells, it is generally agreed, arise out of normal cells. But they have been altered in significant respects. They are generally larger and more irregular than ordinary cells; and instead of developing normally they grow wild. The daughter cells into which a cancer cell divides are themselves cancer cells. Instead of dividing and multi-

plying in accordance with the needs of the organism, they divide and multiply without limit. And instead of respecting the boundaries of nearby tissues as do normal cells, they invade nearby tissues and exhaust their supply of nutrients. Eventually, unless the cancer cells are all removed by surgery or killed by radiation or chemicals, they destroy other tissues and cause death.

Evidence increasingly indicates that it is changes in the DNA chromosomes of a cell which convert it from normal to cancerous. Indeed, one of the major signs of a cancer cell, differentiating it from a normal cell when viewed under the microscope, is the abnormal, disordered pattern of its chromosomes. A normal cell does not ordinarily become a cancer cell, or give rise to a cancer daughter-cell, at a single moment in time or even overnight. Rather, it appears, the conversion from normal cells to true cancer cells proceeds through a series of recognizable stages.

The first step is *hyperplasia*. This means simply that the cells divide more often, so that the number of cells at a particular place in a particular tissue increases. Instead of one layer or two of lining cells in the breathing passages, for example, five or six layers may be produced, or a dozen. Chronic irritation, mechanical or chemical, may produce this hyperplasia or excessive growth. The calluses on the palms of your hands which you get when you chop wood day after day are a familiar example of hyperplasia due to irritation.

The next step is *metaplasia*. This means an alteration in the cell itself, and particularly in the DNA chromosomes in its nuclei. Since these altered or metaplastic cells give rise to daughter cells which resemble themselves, a *lesion* often develops—that is, a group of neighboring metaplastic cells.

At first these groups of metaplastic cells continue to live within their own proper boundaries. Some pathologists, accordingly, do not consider such lesions cancerous. Others call them cancer *in situ*—that is, cancer which keeps its place and does not invade neighboring tissues.

The final step occurs when the cells destroy the boundaries of their native tissue and invade neighboring tissues. Also, cells from the original lesion break loose and migrate to other parts of the body where their daughter cells build additional tumors, a process called *metastasis*. A cancer is generally curable if it is surgically removed or if all the cells are killed before metastasis occurs.

Various agents are known to give rise to cancers. One kind of cancer agent is the virus, which is essentially a bundle of chromosomes held within a protein coat. When certain kinds of viruses invade certain kinds of cells, cancer follows, presumably because the chromosomes from the virus take over control of the cell.

Another important kind of cancer agent is chemical. The chemicals which can cause cancer are called carcinogens and several hun-

dreds of them are known. In most cases, prolonged exposure to a carcinogen precedes the appearance of the cancer. A typical test to determine whether a chemical is a carcinogen is to shave the back of a mouse and apply the chemical hundreds of times over a period of many months to the mouse's skin. If the chemical is a carcinogen, the characteristic series of events will in due course follow in some of the mice: first, hyperplasia, then metaplasia; then growths or lesions composed of metaplastic cells, but still not invasive (carcinoma *in situ*); then true invasive cancer; and finally metastasis and death of the mouse. No one knows why some mice develop cancer following exposure to a carcinogen while others do not. A possible explanation is that a very common virus is also needed for cancer to develop, and that the mice which lack the virus escape the cancer despite the carcinogen.

In addition to carcinogens there are chemicals called co-carcinogens. These substances may not cause cancer even though cells are exposed to them in large amounts repeatedly over long periods. But if cells are exposed to a carcinogen also, even a very small amount of it, chronic exposure to a co-carcinogen may produce a much higher proportion of cancers.

There is evidence that viruses, carcinogens, and co-carcinogens can work together to produce cancers. Many years ago, for example, Dr. Peyton Rous of the Rockefeller Institute infected rabbits with a virus called the Shope papilloma virus. This virus produced hyperplasia—large wartlike growths on the rabbit—but only rarely cancer. But when the rabbits received carcinogens and co-carcinogens as well as the papilloma viruses, true cancer frequently followed. Similar results have since been secured with other combinations of viruses, carcinogens, and co-carcinogens.

Next, a word about the lungs. They are essentially devices for bringing air and blood together under conditions which permit oxygen to migrate from the air to the blood and carbon dioxide to migrate in the opposite direction from blood to air. The air needed for this two-way transfer is carried from the windpipe or trachea to the lungs through a system of branching tubes called the bronchi. The bronchi are lined with a few layers of cells called epithelial cells. Careful studies have shown that most lung cancers originate in these cells in the bronchial linings.

Against this general background, let us return to the smoking-lung cancer problem.

#### CARCINOGENS AND CO-CARCINOGENS

Tobacco itself contains more than a hundred known chemical compounds, including nicotine, which will be discussed in some detail in connection with smoking and cardiovascular diseases. But the chem-

istry of tobacco is of very little concern to us here, since some of the substances found in the tobacco remain in the ash when the tobacco is smoked, while others are profoundly altered during the combustion process, additional compounds are also produced during combustion. What primarily concerns us, accordingly, is the composition of the cigarette smoke which results from the combustion and enters the human body.

More than 270 distinguishable chemical compounds have been identified in this smoke. Of these, at least 15 are known carcinogens, that is, they have been shown to cause cancer either in animal experiments or in observations on humans exposed to them. Here is a list of carcinogens in tobacco smoke.

| Arsenious oxide        | Chrysene                            |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1-2-benzanthracene     | 6 7-cyclopenteno-1-2 benzanthracene |
| 3-4-benzfluoranthene   | 1 2-5 6 benzanthracene              |
| 10 11-benzfluoranthene | 3-4-8 9 dibenzpyrene                |
| 11 12-benzfluoranthene | 3 4-9 10 dibenzpyrene               |
| 1 12-benzperylene      | 3-methyl-pyrene                     |
| 1.2-benzpyrene         | 2-naphthol                          |
| 3.4-benzpyrene         |                                     |

In addition to this list of known carcinogens, cigarette smoke contains many substances which have not yet been tested to determine whether they are or are not carcinogens. In particular, it contains additional chemicals of the class known as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons. Some chemicals of this class are known carcinogens, and the remainder are accordingly suspect.

The quantity of each carcinogen identified in tobacco smoke, to be sure, is very small—in some cases exceedingly small. But here another point must be noted. Cigarette smoke also contains significant amounts of phenol, a powerful co-carcinogen. Even very small amounts of a carcinogen will produce cancer when accompanied or followed by chronic exposure to phenol. And cigarette smoke in addition contains various phenol derivatives and other substances suspected of being also co-carcinogens.

Tobacco smoke itself, when collected and concentrated, is carcinogenic, capable of producing cancer in the standard mouse-skin test. Further, it has been shown to be co-carcinogenic as well; it increases the number of cancers produced when it is applied following the application of a carcinogen.

A demonstration of this co-carcinogen effect is found in the work of Drs. Joseph A. DiPaolo and Paul R. Sheehe of the Roswell Park Memorial Institute in Buffalo, New York. They performed a standard experiment in which a specified amount of a known carcinogen, urethan, was injected into the bellies of a group of mice. Cancers appeared



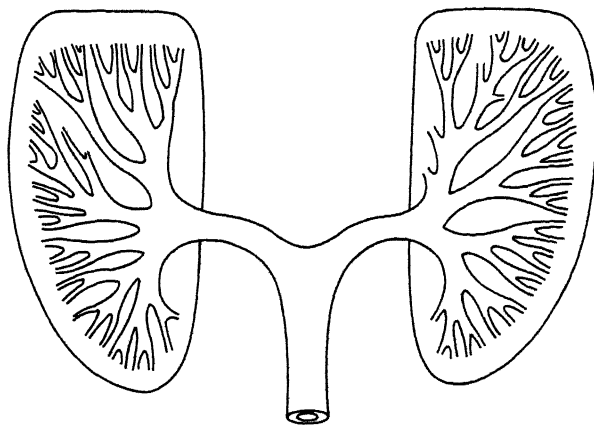
in due course, as expected. In addition, Drs DiPaolo and Sheeche injected the same amount of urethan into the bellies of a second group of mice, and also painted the throats of these mice with condensed tobacco smoke five times a week for six months. These mice developed many more lung cancers than those treated with urethan alone. Indeed, the crop of cancers produced was equivalent to the crop which would have been expected if the amount of urethan injected had been multiplied by 52.

Note, too, that cigarette smoke when inhaled actually reaches the cells out of which lung cancer arises. Let us review this evidence briefly.

When you take a puff of a cigarette, the smoke first enters your mouth and throat. What happens next depends on whether you inhale the smoke or not. Few pipe and cigar smokers inhale the smoke, and few of them get lung cancer. Many cigarette smokers inhale, and most cigarette smokers who get lung cancer inhale. Inhaling means that the smoke passes on down from the throat through the trachea or windpipe to the bronchial tubes.

A bronchial tube begins at the windpipe. Then it divides or forks into two tubes, and each of these forks in turn (see Figure 5). The structure of the tubes thus resembles in part the branching of a tree, and the tubes are therefore sometimes known as the "bronchial tree." The deeper you inhale, the farther along the bronchial tree the smoke proceeds.

If you examine the drawing, you will note that each tube is neces-



**Figure 5.** The structure of the bronchial tubes resembles the branching of a tree, note that the tubes are wider just before each fork. Inhaled cigarette smoke entering these regions is slowed down by the greater width, exposure to particles in the smoke is thus greatest where the tubes are widest. Autopsy studies have shown that pre-cancerous cell changes are most likely to occur here.

sarily wider at each fork. This widening causes the air or smoke to slow down as it enters the region of greater width and, perhaps, to deposit any particles it may contain. The process is much the same as that of a flowing river which deposits its sediment as a delta where it broadens into a lake or ocean. The exposure to the particles in the smoke is thus greatest at the points where the tube is widest—and autopsy studies of hundreds of human lungs have shown that it is in precisely these areas of maximum exposure that pre-cancerous changes (hyperplasia and metaplasia of the cells) are most likely to appear.

Thus a very plausible case can be made for a direct causal (in addition to a statistical) connection between smoking and lung cancer. Some smokers draw the smoke into their lungs and some do not; it is mainly the smokers who inhale the smoke who run the excess risk of lung cancer. The smoke contains carcinogens and co-carcinogens. The cells which become cancerous are those along the lining of the bronchial tubes through which the smoke is drawn. And the lesions are most likely to appear at the very spots, the wide places, where exposure to the smoke is most intense. Here at the very least is a *prima facie* case for a direct relationship between the statistics reviewed earlier and the events which occur in the human lung.

Many reputable investigators feel that this explanation of lung cancer as the result of carcinogens and co-carcinogens found in cigarette smoke is only part of the story. They call attention to such additional factors as those noted below.

#### MUCUS, CILIA, IRRITATION

The surface of the bronchial tubes into which smoke is drawn is normally moist with a fluid called mucus, excreted by cells along the surface. Further, many of the surface cells are decked with tiny whiplike fringes called cilia, which wave back and forth in such a way as to propel the mucus upward and outward. This is clearly a protective mechanism. Irritating or poisonous particles entering the lung are likely to be trapped in the mucus; and, as the mucus is propelled upward and outward by the cilia, the trapped particles are themselves ejected and the lung thus protected from them.

Cigarette smoke, however, paralyzes the ejecting action of the cilia in the bronchial tubes. As hyperplastic changes occur in the lining of the tubes, moreover, the cilia disappear altogether. Thus, inhaling smoke deprives the bronchial tubes of their normal protective mechanism. Some researchers attribute the relationship between smoking and lung cancer at least in part to this effect on the cilia rather than solely to the direct action of carcinogens and co-carcinogens.

Further, abundant evidence indicates that cigarette smoke is an irritant. No smoker who feels the irritation in his mouth or who de-

velops a cough following smoking doubts this. Chronic, day-after-day irritation can itself evoke hyperplasia, metaplasia, and cancer in some tissues, and some investigators prefer to attribute the relationship between smoking and lung cancer to this factor of chronic irritation.

Note that the four theories based on carcinogens, co-carcinogens, paralysis and disappearance of cilia, and chronic irritation are *not* mutually exclusive or incompatible. Nature often proves far more complex than investigators initially assume. It is not at all inconceivable that two, three, or even all four of these factors may be found to play their role in the genesis of lung cancer. Cigarette smoke might initiate the damage by paralyzing the cilia, then produce hyperplasia through chronic irritation, and finally produce metaplasia and invasive metastatic cancer through both its carcinogens and its co-carcinogens. Or it may turn out that a virus is also involved, and that the smoke acts by opening the door for the virus—or that the virus paves the way for the damaging effects of the smoke.

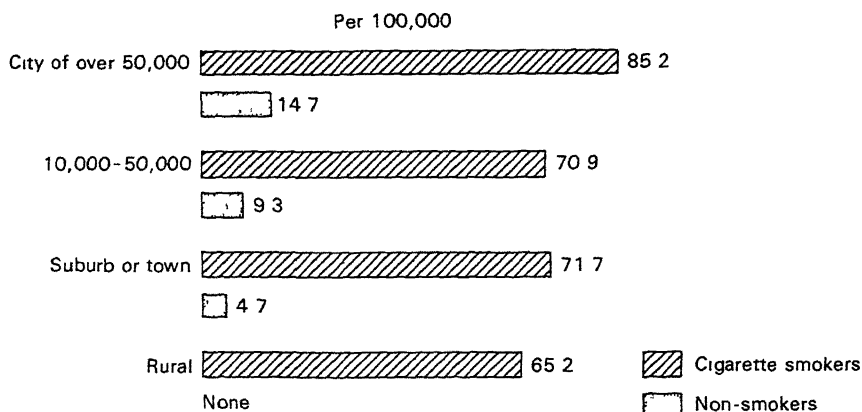
None of these possibilities is offered here as *the* explanation of the relationship between cigarette smoking and lung cancer. All that need be established is that they provide plausible explanations. The statistical evidence firmly establishes the relationship. The pathological and experimental evidence shows that the relationship is not so wildly improbable as to cast doubt on the credibility of the statistics.

#### SMOKE AND THE LUNGS OF MICE

One theme often stressed by spokesmen for the cigarette industry is the lack of experiments proving that smoking can cause lung cancer.

One such experiment can be readily imagined. Hundreds of sets of identical twins might be selected at birth. They would be brought up together in exactly the same way. At a specified age one twin in each pair would be set to smoking a specified number of cigarettes at a specified tempo to a specified butt length each day for the rest of his life, while the other twin in each pair would be monitored continuously throughout his life to make sure he never smoked a single cigarette. All twins dying would be autopsied, and a search made for lung cancer. After some 50 or 60 years, the surviving twins would be slaughtered and their lungs and bronchial tubes similarly examined. If the twins who smoked had a higher proportion of lung cancer, and if the number of lung cancers were proportional to the number of cigarettes they smoked, almost everyone except possibly the cigarette industry would agree that the smoking had caused the lung cancers.

Such an experiment is hardly feasible in a human population, of course. And even in a population of mice it raises serious difficulties. In the first place, mice breathe through their noses, not their mouths,

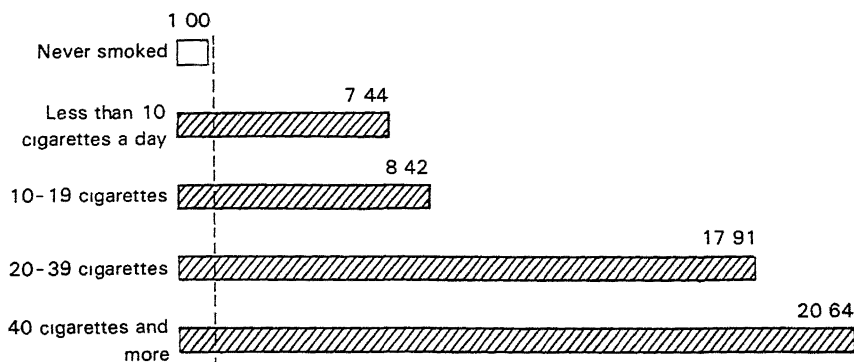


**Figure 6.** Death Rates from well-established cases of lung cancer for cigarette smokers vs non-smokers (meaning men who never at any time smoked regularly) in urban and rural areas. Adenocarcinoma cases, less linked to smoking than other kinds of lung cancer, are not included

and their nasal passages contain a series of excellent protective filters which remove particles from the air before it reaches the lungs. Thus, a mouse in a smoke-filled room gets far less of the smoke into his bronchial tubes than a smoker who inhales. Further, mice and other small animals are quite sensitive to the acute poisonous effects of nicotine or other substances in cigarette smoke. If subjected to the intensity of smoke which a human smoker draws into his lungs when he inhales, some mice keel over immediately and die; many others die soon thereafter.

The most that can be accomplished with mice and presumably other small animals is to simulate exposure to cigarette smoke very roughly comparable to that experienced in the lungs of a casual cigarette smoker who smokes only a few cigarettes a day.

Such an experiment has been performed by Drs. Cecilie and Rudolph Leuchtenberger and Paul F. Doolon, supported by a grant from the Tobacco Industry Research Committee. They used an inbred strain of mice closely resembling each other in genetic inheritance. Half of the mice were placed in one enclosed chamber and half in another; six hundred mice in all were used. A cigarette-smoking machine was attached to each of the chambers, and one of the machines smoked eight cigarettes a day, five days a week, month after month. The other chamber was exactly the same, and the mice in it were treated in exactly the same way except that the second cigarette-smoking machine did not actually smoke any cigarettes. The experiment thus closely duplicates the impractical experiment with human twins except that the smoke from eight cigarettes per chamber per



**Figure 7. Mortality Ratios** for lung cancer deaths by number of cigarettes smoked daily. This diagram is based on the findings of one of the most comprehensive studies made to date (the Hammond-Horn study); but all studies have shown similar results.

day, inhaled through the mouse nose, was much less concentrated than the smoke which reaches the lungs of a human cigarette smoker who inhales

After various periods of exposure in the smoke chamber, both the smoke-exposed mice and the control mice were sacrificed, and their lungs examined.

The bronchial tubes of the mice exposed to the tobacco smoke differed from the bronchial tubes of the control mice in several significant ways. First, there was more hyperplasia, or "proliferative changes"—an increased number of cells. Second, there was more metaplasia, or changes in the type of cells and in their nuclei and DNA chromosomes. Third, the researchers were able by subtle means to demonstrate actual changes in the DNA found in individual cells. Finally, whole groups of cells or lesions demonstrating these characteristics were noted in the mice exposed to smoke—the kind of lesions which might be labelled carcinoma *in situ*.

Invasive, metastatic carcinoma did not turn up during these experiments, and several reasons may be advanced for this failure of the smoke-induced lesions to take the last, fatal step. The exposure of the mouse lungs to smoke was, of course, relatively mild as compared with the exposure of the lungs of a human smoke-inhaler who gets true cancer. Also, the mouse's life is short; three years or so as compared with the 20 years or more to which a human's lung is ordinarily exposed to cigarette smoke before a cancer appears. The significant point about this experiment, at all events, is not that the metaplastic lesions in the mouse bronchial tubes failed to become invasive and metastatic, but rather that all of the pre-cancerous changes from hyperplasia

through metaplasia and the formation of lesions did appear following a relatively mild exposure of the bronchial tube lining of the mice to the smoke

In this experiment, as in many other smoking-lung cancer experiments, the smoke did not induce uniform changes in all the mice exposed to it. Despite the fact that all of the mice came from the same inbred strain, some appeared to be strangely immune to the effects of the smoke—or, looking at the matter the other way round, some appeared to be strangely susceptible. The Leuchtenbergers and Doolon themselves suspect that a virus may prove to be the explanation of this difference in response. The mice with hyperplastic and metaplastic changes and with lesions, they suggest, may be the ones infected with some virus or other. The virus by itself, according to this theory, rarely produces changes, and neither does tobacco smoke by itself; it may be the tobacco smoke acting on virus-infected cells, or the virus entering such smoke-damaged cells, which produces the changes noted.

#### “MICE ARE NOT MEN”

Even though the changes typical of cancer formation can be experimentally produced in mouse bronchial tubes with tobacco smoke, mice are not, of course, men—as spokesmen for the cigarette industry always point out in commenting on experiments of the kind just described. They want evidence that this also occurs in *human* bronchial tubes

Here is the evidence

For more than eight years four competent researchers have been engaged in a microscopic study of human lungs taken from the body at autopsy. The four are:

DR. OSCAR AUERBACH, Senior Medical Investigator at the Veterans' Administration Hospital in East Orange, New Jersey, and Associate Professor of Pathology at New York Medical College

DR. ARTHUR PURDY STOUT, Professor Emeritus of Surgery at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University

DR. E. CUYLER HAMMOND, Director of Statistical Research, American Cancer Society

LAWRENCE GARFINKEL of the Statistical Research Section, American Cancer Society.

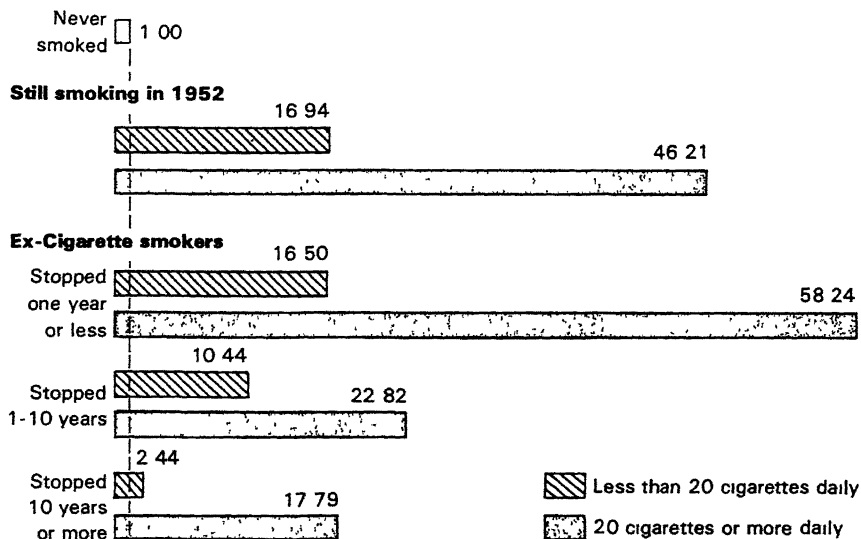
The Auerbach-Stout-Hammond-Garfinkel study, financed by the American Cancer Society, comes closer than any other project except the statistical studies to nailing the relationship between smoking and lung cancer. In the course of the project more than 100,000 separate slides containing cells from the bronchial tubes of 1522 men and women were examined under the microscope—a tremendous undertaking. Dr. Auerbach examined every one of the 100,000 slides to as-

sure uniformity of judgment. Dr. Stout checked Dr. Auerbach's findings by re-examining a selection of slides to see if he reached the same conclusions. Some of the tissue examined came from non-smokers, some from light smokers, heavy smokers, and ex-smokers. All of the 1522 patients had died of causes other than lung cancer. Relatives were interviewed to ascertain the smoking history of the men whose lungs were examined; the interviewers were not, of course, informed of the microscopic findings at any time, and, to avoid any chance of bias, Drs. Auerbach and Stout were not informed of the smoking histories until after they had examined the slides. Each slide was identified only by a serial number selected at random, so that if any errors were made in reading the slides, they would be random errors, affecting slides from the lungs of non-smokers along with those from the lungs of smokers.

The findings from his human study closely parallel the mouse findings of the Leuchtenbergers, but go at least one important step farther.

Like the Leuchtenberger study, the Auerbach study found each step in the cancer process clearly identifiable—hyperplasia, or excessive number of cells; metaplasia, or characteristic changes in the cells and in their nuclei; and the formation of lesions composed entirely of such cells (*carcinoma in situ*).

The Auerbach study established that the pre-cancerous changes



**Figure 8. Mortality Ratios** for lung cancer deaths in terms of smoking habits (also from the Hammond-Horn study and based on well-established cases of the two most common kinds of lung cancer linked to smoking—epidermoid and undifferentiated carcinoma). The relatively high figure for smokers who had stopped for one year or less is explained by the fact that many of these smokers stopped because of the onset of disease symptoms.

were most likely to occur at the places where the bronchial tubes forked—that is, at precisely the places where the exposure to the smoke is greatest.

The study noted occasional cases of hyperplasia and metaplasia among men and women who had never smoked. This is in line with the statistical finding that lung cancer does occur occasionally in non-smokers.

The proportion of hyperplasia, metaplasia, and cells with atypical nuclei, however, was very much higher among cigarette smokers than among non-smokers. Further, carcinoma *in situ*, strictly defined, was found only among smokers. Cigar and pipe smokers had more pre-cancerous lesions than non-smokers, but fewer than cigarette smokers.

The number of places in the bronchial tubes showing hyperplasia, metaplasia, and carcinoma *in situ* was proportional to the amount of smoking. The heavy smokers—those who smoked a pack a day or more—had the largest number of these pre-cancerous changes in their lungs. Indeed, the bronchial linings of heavy smokers who died of causes other than lung cancer closely resembled in almost every respect the lungs of lung cancer victims. In some cases, ominously enough, actual invasive cancers were found—small cancers which had not yet made known their presence when death ensued from other causes.

The Auerbach-Stout-Hammond-Garfinkel data can be interpreted in several ways. They are consistent with the carcinogen theory, the co-carcinogen theory and the chronic irritation theory. They are even consistent with the virus theory, for it may be a virus which ultimately determines whether or not the changes noted will progress. And Dr. Hammond points to still another interpretation.

Bronchial lining cells, he suggests, may develop hyperplasia and metaplasia spontaneously, without any external agent causing these changes. This is shown by the fact that some non-smokers develop these changes, and even progress to lung cancer. The environment in the normal lung, however, favors the survival and multiplication of normal cells in their competition with the pre-cancerous cells; this would explain why so few of the non-smokers with abnormal cells in their lungs go on to develop lung cancer.

In the lung of the cigarette inhaler the environment is very different. The cilia are paralyzed, they disappear; the cells are exposed to many chemicals which affect their chances of survival. Under the altered conditions introduced by the inhaling of cigarette smoke, Dr. Hammond suggests, the metaplastic cells may gain some important competitive advantage over the normal cells. They multiply, and the cancer results from the competitive advantage thus acquired.

All competent researchers in this area agree that the full story is



not yet available. Much more research is urgently needed. But already we know that cigarette smoke as a "cause" of lung cancer is not a remote or implausible suggestion to be dismissed out of hand. On the contrary, it is a highly plausible and reasonable suggestion. It is strictly in line with the experimental and pathological evidence assembled to date.

Any one of the approaches discussed would be enough to show the plausibility of the conclusion that cigarette smoking *can* cause cancer. When combined with the statistical evidence that cigarette smoking *does* cause cancer, there is no remaining room for reasonable doubt.

#### IV. SMOKING AND LUNG CANCER: SUMMING UP

##### "CAUSE," THE GREAT RED HERRING

The attentive reader will no doubt by now have noted that the word "cause" has been used only rarely in this presentation, and then generally in quotation marks. For though most laymen, if asked, would no doubt assure you that they know what the word "cause" means, there are considerable difficulties in defining it precisely—and even greater difficulties in determining whether a particular set of facts does or does not fit the chosen definition of "cause" and "effect." Philosophers, logicians, and scientists have thought much and debated more on the meaning and applicability of these terms.

The difficulties inherent in these concepts, moreover, have been obscured recently by those whose main aim seems to be to make sure that the cigarette-smoking-lung cancer relationship shall *not* be described as a cause-and-effect relationship. This can be done by setting up definitions of cause and effect so stringent that nothing can ever be shown to be the cause of anything else. This saves cigarette smoking from being labeled a cause of lung cancer, of course, but it also requires the introduction of some new term to characterize the relationship.

We propose to detour around this debate over words almost altogether, and to consider instead at this point the two questions which should really interest laymen when they consider whether smoking "causes" cancer.

The first practical question the laymen should bear in mind is quite simply, "If I start smoking cigarettes, will my chances of dying of lung cancer go up significantly?" The answer, as we have seen, is Yes.

The other practical question is for men and women who already smoke cigarettes: "If I stop smoking them, will my chances of getting lung cancer go down?" The answer is again Yes.

Statistical evidence on the latter score comes from the prospective studies reviewed earlier. The Doll and Hill study of deaths among British physicians, for example, produced the following data:

|   | Lung cancer deaths per<br>100,000 man-years |
|---|---|
| Non-smokers   | 10  |
| Ex-smokers who gave up smoking 10<br>years or more before study began | 24  |
| Ex-smokers who gave up smoking 1 to<br>10 years before study began    | 64  |
| Smokers who continued to smoke  | 112   |

The Hammond-Horn prospective study of American smokers and non-smokers, because it dealt with a larger study population, was able to display the same effect separately among both heavy and light cigarette smokers.

Among the heavy smokers (a pack a day or more) the figures were as follows:

|   | Lung cancer deaths per<br>100,000 man-years |
|---|---|
| Non-smokers   | 3   |
| Ex-smokers who gave up smoking 10<br>years or more before study began | 61  |
| Ex-smokers who gave up smoking 1 to<br>10 years before study began    | 78  |
| Smokers who continued to smoke  | 158   |

Among the light smokers (less than a pack a day) the effect of stopping was quite similar:

|   | Lung cancer deaths per<br>100,000 man-years |
|---|---|
| Non-smokers   | 3   |
| Ex-smokers who gave up smoking 10<br>years or more before study began | 8   |
| Ex-smokers who gave up smoking 1 to<br>10 years before study began    | 36  |
| Smokers who continued to smoke  | 58  |

The mouse-lung experiments of the Leuchtenbergers fully confirm the statistical findings in this respect. Some mice were examined immediately after a series of exposures in the smoke chamber, and other mice after several months of "recovery" in a smoke-free chamber. The mice allowed to recover showed more changes in their lungs

than those never exposed to smoke, but fewer than the mice examined immediately. The findings indicate that the lesions caused by the smoking—at least up to the final, fatal change to invasive and metastatic cancer—are reversible

Next, the human lung observations of the Auerbach-Stout-Hammond-Garfinkel group fully confirm both the statistical and the experimental evidence. These researchers compared tissues taken from the lungs of 72 ex-smokers with tissues from the lungs of 72 non-smokers and 72 smokers who continued to smoke until lung cancer was diagnosed. The three groups were matched for age, occupational status, and urban-or-rural residence. Metaplastic cells with altered nuclei were found in 1.2% of the slides from the lungs of non-smokers, as compared with 60% for ex-smokers—and 93.2% for current smokers!

Further, the Auerbach group found in the lungs of ex-smokers a kind of cell that they had never seen anywhere else, in either smokers or non-smokers. These cells had a contracted nucleus and seemed to be dying, the Auerbach group named them “disintegrating cells.” The suggestion is that they represent pre-cancerous cells which are dying out in ex-smokers instead of reproducing and multiplying. The Auerbach group concludes

“We feel that the findings of an increase in the number of cells with atypical nuclei following exposure to cigarette smoke, and a decrease in such cells with cessation of smoking, provides a reasonable explanation for the now well-established relationship between cigarette smoking and lung cancer.”

These data, of course, should be of the greatest practical interest to men and women who are wondering whether or not they should stop smoking cigarettes. But in addition they have overwhelming theoretical significance.

One objection sometimes raised to the smoking-lung cancer theory is the possibility that some other factor associated with smoking—call it once more the X-factor—may be responsible for the lung cancer. As noted earlier, this suppositious factor would have at least the following curious characteristics:

- Smokers must have this factor and non-smokers must lack it.
- Pipe and cigar smokers must have less of it than cigarette smokers.
- Seventh Day Adventists must lack it.

To this unlikely list must now be added a fourth implausible characteristic of the hypothetical X-factor, it must occasionally disappear in men who have had it for years or even decades—and this disappearance must occur among the men who stop smoking!

## CIGARETTE SMOKING IS NOT THE ONLY "CAUSE"

While the evidence accumulated to date, and the conclusions drawn from the evidence by competent, impartial public bodies, leaves no reasonable room for doubt that cigarette smoking causes lung cancer in the usual meaning of the word "cause," it certainly does not follow that cigarette smoking is the *only* cause or the only factor in lung cancer

*Heredity*, for example, may play a role in the disease. There are studies suggesting that the close relatives of a lung cancer patient are somewhat more likely to contract the disease than others. But the hereditary factor is mild, indeed barely discernible, as compared with the overwhelming impact of the cigarette-smoking factor.

*Viruses*, as we have seen, may somehow or other be involved in the causation of lung cancer. They may explain, for example, why some heavy smokers get lung cancer while others do not. But virus-lung cancer evidence, if it were to become available later on, would in no way mitigate the direct, overwhelming impact of cigarette smoking.

*Air pollution* is quite probably also a factor in lung cancer. Indeed, a quite convincing case can be made out for such a relationship, including the known presence of carcinogens and co-carcinogens in the polluted air of our cities. A detailed review of this case falls outside the scope of this discussion of *smoking* and the public interest. The prospective studies do show, however, that of the two factors, cigarette smoking is by far the more significant. The possibility has not been ruled out that smoking and air pollution may have a combined effect which is greater than either factor considered separately.

## ... AND LUNG CANCER IS NOT INEVITABLE

Finally, the statistics do not, of course, point to an inevitable death from lung cancer for all cigarette smokers. Even among those who smoke two packs or more a day from boyhood to old age, eight or nine out of ten will die of something else. But it is now very clear that the risk of lung cancer for cigarette smokers as a group is enormously increased, and that the risk is directly proportional to the amount smoked

# THE THINKING MACHINE

JOHN PFEIFFER



Modern calculating machines are solving problems which once required the full-time efforts of hundreds of skilled adding-machine operators. The devices help design jet planes, analyze census reports, predict elections and weather. Impressed with such accomplishments, investigators commonly refer to their creations in surprisingly personal terms, as if they were flesh-and-blood assistants. Technical reports discuss computing and memory "organs." The machines are said to "obey orders," "make judgments," "communicate with the outside world." Scientists as well as reporters have been speaking of "thinking machines" and "electronic brains."

Just what does this sort of talk mean? And why is it sometimes resented? We tend to bristle up at the suggestion that machines do brainwork. Strangely enough, however, we would never think of arguing with a person who tells us that machines do physical work or labor. We are quite willing to accept the fact that steam shovels and other machines can do many of the things formerly done by human muscles—and do them faster and more efficiently. At the same time we take it for granted that many muscular skills from building a stone wall to assembling fine watches may never be completely mechanized.

We regard the facts dispassionately, giving due credit to the machines as well as to their designers. The same attitude could be useful in deciding whether or not machines think. But it might even

be better to put the question the other way around, especially since we are more interested in brains than computers—is the brain a calculating machine? In certain ways the brain seems to work like a highly advanced “natural” computer and these similarities are worth noting, together with some important differences.

#### LIVING COMPUTERS

The most significant resemblance between brains and the new machines is that both can solve a wide variety of mathematical problems. Your brain is computing continually—and not just in some figurative sense. It is computing as definitely as any electronic device. Playing tennis, writing a letter, discussing politics—these and other activities are the results of long series of calculations performed by millions of nerve cells in your brain.

Like a calculating machine, your brain uses information as raw material. Information is fed into the machine by means of coded electrical impulses whose elaborate patterns represent words and numbers and instructions. Exactly the same thing happens in the nervous system. Your brain also receives raw information as electrical impulses flashed to it from your eyes, ears and other sense organs. Sensations are translated into pulses and given identifying numbers so that the brain can use them. Assigning, manipulating, classifying and comparing information is the essence of all the things we call brainwork.

Every sound you hear produces small movements of your eardrum. The membrane vibrates the way the diaphragm of a telephone mouthpiece vibrates when you speak into it. The vibrations are converted into electrical impulses, and the number of impulses is a natural code that tells your brain facts about what you happen to be listening to. Thus, an extremely soft sound may produce about ten electrical impulses per second in the nerve that brings auditory information to the brain. The loudest sounds you can hear without wincing are represented by larger numbers, creating three hundred to four hundred pulses per second in the nerve, and intermediate values stand for intermediate intensities. All sensations and all qualities of sensations—pitch, timbre, brightness, degree of pain, intensity of odor—are similarly translated into series of electrical pulses.

A relatively simple reflex illustrates how the brain may use the information fed into it. When you step from a motion-picture theater into bright sunshine, the pupils of your eyes promptly contract to pin-point dimensions. They contract to shut out excess light, reducing their diameters by just enough to keep the brightness at a suitable operating level. The very existence of such reflexes indicates that computing circuits are built into the nervous system. To adjust the diameters of your pupils, your brain requires certain information. It

measures the intensity of light by counting the number of electrical impulses it receives through the optical nerve. Furthermore, it has standards of what level of illumination is desirable, and "knows" roughly how many thousandths of an inch each pupil must contract or dilate to achieve that level.

Far more subtle calculations are involved in the advanced mathematics of mind. Investigators at many laboratories in this country and abroad are devoting considerable attention to an amazing feat which we perform every moment of our waking lives. How do we identify objects whether they appear small or large, near or far away, upright, or tilted? As one specialist put it, "The fundamental thing that is happening to an organism like a man . . . going forward with his eyes facing forward, is that he is seeing the same forms in varying sizes." When you see two shapes—one small and at a great distance and turned at an angle, the other large and near-by and facing you "head-on"—and recognize both as squares, your brain is executing one of its most remarkable functions.

Stated in such simple terms, the feat may not seem particularly important. But if we understood how it is accomplished, we would know a great deal about how ideas are formed and the nature of reasoning. It is a significant prototype for the deepest sort of abstract thought. In recognizing two shapes as squares, independent of their crude appearances, your brain calculates using extremely complex equations known as "invariants." This permits you to rid the forms of their apparent differences and concentrate on similarities, which is the essence of abstraction. Such processes make it possible to identify pipes, pens, cigarettes and tree trunks as cylinders—and to discover that the same laws which account for the fall of an apple also keep the planets revolving in their orbits. They are computing processes.

The brain, like a calculating machine, computes with the aid of electrical circuits. The circuits are composed of nerve cells which have been compared to vacuum tubes. Both devices may be used as relays or switches that can be "opened" or "closed" to prevent or permit the flow of currents through them. Nerve cells are the basic elements of the computing circuits in our heads. Moreover, like vacuum tubes, they are "two-fingered" devices and the brain may use them to compute in the binary rather than in the decimal system. A nerve cell is either conducting current or is inactive. It can be "off" or "on," 0 or 1, and is ideally suited to signal in terms of binary digits or "bits," as they are called. The nervous system codes sensations, computes orders to be relayed to the muscles and handles all other messages in terms of off-on impulses. The results are our actions, emotions, ideas.

Brains and computers both require methods to insure the accuracy of their calculations. One device, the Binac (binary automatic

computer), does millions of multiplications an hour and contains a simple and effective error reducer. Binac consists of two seven-hundred-tube subassemblies, working in parallel, both work on the same step of the same problem at once. Each step is thus double-checked and, if the twin computers come up with different answers, Binac stops until the cause of the disagreement is remedied. The chance that the twins will make the same mistake at the same time is extremely slim.

As mentioned previously, some investigators believe that the brain may use a similar system to minimize the risk of illusion. We must be able to rely on the evidence of our senses. It is important that what we see represents a real object or event in the world around us, and the eye is designed to insure that this is what actually happens. The retina of your eye contains some 100,000,000 cells that go into action when light strikes them. But there are only about 1,000,000 nerve fibers running from the retina to the brain. An average of a hundred cells are connected to every fiber, and the response of a single one of them is not enough to make us see a speck of light. That single cell may have been stimulated accidentally, due to some local and temporary irritation. From five to fifteen retina cells must be stimulated within a fraction of a second before the fiber transmits a signal to the brain.

Insurance against error is going on throughout the brain and nervous system. The information that pours into our sense organs is continually channeled into parallel nerve paths. It is checked so many times that our interpretations of everyday events rarely differ from reality sufficiently to do us harm. The brain is thus insured against accident and old age, as well as illusion. A vacuum tube can be removed and replaced, but not a nerve cell. Because the nervous system has its parallel paths, we can be useful citizens even with parts of our brains missing—and even though some of our nerve cells die as we grow older.

Other observations hint at how the brain may do its computing. For example, Maniac's high-speed memory consists of fluorescent green spots on the screens of television-type tubes. These spots will not glow forever. In fact, if left to themselves they fade away within a second. So they are restored to full brilliance by a scanning electron beam that sweeps across the entire screen about forty times a second, just to be on the safe side. This regular rhythm is interrupted only when Maniac has to "concentrate," to extract something from its memory. The scanning beam makes patterns which may be compared to those of the electrical waves or alpha rhythms of the human brain. The waves are usually prominent whenever we relax—but stop the instant we begin to take notice of our surroundings.

There are interesting similarities between the workings of some



of the brain's predicting devices and the ones we construct. For example, certain computers use radar information to control the guns of anti-aircraft batteries. These computers are predictors. They aim their guns not directly at the target, but at some other spot where the target is expected to be by the time a missile reaches the proper height and explodes—and they occasionally break down in ways that remind us of certain nervous diseases. The coming of more and more ingenious computers may add considerably to what we already know about our brains.

### *THE HUMAN ELEMENT*

But a model is not the same as the real thing. The resemblances between higher nerve centers and electronic calculators are instructive—and so are the differences. Dr. Warren McCulloch points out: "The brain is like a computing machine, but there is no computing machine like the brain." For example, the machines have puny memories. Maniac can store about fifteen average-sized book pages worth of information. The brain's capacity is billions of times greater.

If the machines had memories as large as ours, it might take them years to find any given item. We "thumb through" our memories at astounding speeds. Supposing I were to ask you suddenly, "Do you know Wilson Fleming?" The odds are that you can answer that question in a fraction of a second, although you might take a bit longer if you happen to know a person whose first name is Wilson. But think of what you are doing in that brief period. You have probably met several thousand persons, and you can add a great many more names which you read at one time or another in newspapers and other publications.

All that is stored in your head, together with vast quantities of other information. Yet without any advance notice you can explore the entire lot and come up with a yes-no answer in less time than it takes to utter the name in question. In considering this everyday accomplishment, we are left gasping. It is difficult to conceive of a device, or an ensemble of devices, that would remotely approach such speeds. Perhaps if we continue studying the brain, however, we may learn how it does the trick. In any case, comparing brains and electronic devices can give us a fuller appreciation of our own abilities.

Nature manages to perform her feats in exceedingly small spaces. Her vacuum tubes are microscopic cells; her wires are fibers many times finer than the filaments of a spider's web. Dr. McCulloch points out that the Empire State Building would not be large enough to house a computer with as many tubes as there are nerve cells in the

brain—"and it would take Niagara Falls to supply the power, and Niagara River to cool it." Furthermore, the machines are out-performed by a wide margin as far as reliability of operation is concerned. Engineers are well satisfied if a computer runs several days before it develops a blown-out tube or some other defect. But the brain works much longer without making an error.

These points merely suggest what is probably the most important difference of all. Present-day machines should be compared with low-level brains only. Their behavior is a matter of "instincts," like that of insects which find food, communicate with one another and perform other elaborate actions in a relatively rigid manner. From one standpoint, however, our machines are not nearly as advanced as insects. They must be regarded as slaves. As a matter of fact, they are designed specifically to be slaves, to do only what they are told to do. If an innocent computer happens to come up with a "notion" of its own, it is promptly punished. It is turned off, overhauled and repaired.

The human element is not built into the calculating machines we have discussed. Its significance becomes particularly evident in studies of an unusual type of computer—an automatic chess-player. According to one scientist, a machine that played unbeatable chess would have to be "slightly larger than the universe." But the machine would not have to be perfect, or anywhere near it, to play a first-rate game. As part of a broad program to develop new automatic switchboard equipment, Dr. Claude Shannon of the Bell Telephone Laboratories has gone into the problem of designing such a robot. He has actually constructed a machine that ranks as a promising beginner.

Tentatively nicknamed Caissac, after Caissa the goddess of chess, it is a specialized type of computer with a "nervous system" consisting of 250 relays—about the number of cells in the brain of an ant. Caissac is wired to a chessboard, each square of which contains a button and a tiny light bulb. To start a play you press two buttons: first the one on the square where your chessman is located, then the one on the square you select for your move. The machine flashes a warning red light if you move illegally, indicates its answering move by lighting the proper bulbs on the board, and the game is on. It plays only three-piece games in which it has an advantage of one piece, say, rook and king to opponent's king. But judging by his experience with this trial machine, Dr. Shannon is convinced that any one of the existing large-scale electronic computers could play good chess.

There are an astronomically large number of ways of playing the first ten moves alone (to be exact: 169, 519, 829, 100, 544, 000, 000, 000, 000, 000). It is obviously out of the question to examine all these possibilities. So the machine, like any human player, would

discard the vast majority and employ standard openings. It would assign a definite value or number to every position it scans, and move so as to attain the position with the highest value. To do this it would draw on the experience of centuries of master chess.

Chessman can be measured in pawn units. Generally speaking, experts consider that a queen is worth nine pawns, a rook five, and a bishop or knight three. Mobility or freedom of movement can also be estimated in pawn units. If one player has ten more possible moves than his opponent, his advantage is roughly equivalent to one pawn and the machine would include this estimate. Armed with such information, it would examine its possible moves and consider a selected few, say, four or five moves ahead. Judging by current electronic computing speeds, it could examine about two million positions in a minute. Assuming the machine was pitted against a better than-average amateur, it would furnish stiff competition, probably winning as many games as it lost.

But the machine would lose to experts, because something is missing. The computers in use today do not act on their own, and learn by trial and error the way we often do. The British investigator, Dr. W. Ross Ashby, believes that a genuine learning machine could be built. He makes it clear, however, that the machine would require an appreciable measure of freedom. "The more minutely we design a machine to play chess just as we want it to—admitting no other information—the more certain it is to play just *our* sort of chess, with all the faults and wrongly conceived strategies. We are in exactly the same position as the father, a keen but mediocre chess-player, who wants his son to become world champion. The understanding father will not try to teach his son all chess, but will try to teach him how to profit by future experiences."

The principles which hold for chess also hold for other forms of mental accomplishment. A device built to learn the game could think along other lines, and would be far closer to a brain than the computers used today. How would it be constructed? For one thing, it would contain a very large number of similar elements such as vacuum tubes. The tubes might not all be wired according to conventional methods. A learning machine might have some permanent, soldered connections. But it would also acquire special connections for flexibility of response, connections that could be made and broken readily, at least during the early stages of its education.

The machine would include sensing organs, devices like photoelectric cells or microphones which are sensitive to changes in its environment. It would then be ready to detect those changes—and take account of trends that made themselves evident with the passage of time. For example, an extremely bright light would produce large effects in a photoelectric eye, stirring the machine up electrically.

These effects would produce permanent changes in the machine's circuits. They would cause the machine to adjust its circuits in a particular region, so as to reduce the glare. Or, to put it another way, the machine would seek a state of least disturbance or greatest comfort.

In other words, machines can be conditioned—and not just in theory. Dr. Ashby has already built a device called the homeostat which adjusts its own circuits, and is developing a far “cleverer” model. Dr. Grey Walter [known for] his work on brain waves has built an ingenious electro-mechanical animal which walks about and returns to a hangar for recharging when its batteries run down. It resembles a turtle and, like living experimental animals, can be conditioned to seek rewards and avoid punishment. The device learns its relatively sophisticated behavior with the aid of six electronic tubes

### *UNFINISHED BUSINESS*

Such machines will have an increasingly important effect on the way we regard the world and ourselves. The brain has often been discussed as if it were basically mysterious, beyond the powers of human understanding, the product of forces and materials quite different from those which form other tissues. Advances in the technology of computers, and in biological and medical studies, indicate that the brain is no such thing. During the past generation we have learned more about the higher centers of the nervous system than our predecessors learned during the entire previous history of brain research.

On the other hand, we are clearly far from solving some of our major problems, a fact emphasized by considering the abilities and limitations of existing computers. Yet one occasionally hears it said that the brain is nothing but a machine. The assertion is usually made in a slurring tone which implies that the brain has been overrated in some unspecified way and is supposed to put an end to further discussion. One investigator calls this “nothing buttery” thinking. It is certainly a grave insult to the brain—and to the machines. Comparing the brain to the machines of the past makes little sense. Comparing it to high-speed electronic computers can be stimulating, if we do not lose sight of the differences. But if we consider certain experimental machines, our comparisons may have more substance to them.

Our most ingenious machines are merely hints of what is to come. We can expect the gradual development of devices which are “born incomplete” and can mature. In fact, new experimental models are being designed right now. Many of the connections among their parts will be made as they age and are exposed to more and

more varied situations. What would we do with the new machines? They might save engineers a great deal of trouble by taking on extra duties as they learned.

For example, you have to wait as long to complete a telephone call to a friend you ring daily as you do to be connected with a stranger you call for the first time. The automatic switchboards we have today are not self-improving. They do not take account of what connections are used often, rarely or not at all. A switchboard which learned, however, might develop the knack of furnishing extra-prompt service for friends or business associates. Robot pilots might learn new methods of flying, or attacking and evading enemy airplanes. Computers might find short cuts which would permit them to solve problems faster.

We may have to develop special learning circuits for many of the coming robots. If they are to become what we want them to become and perform duties we select, some sort of preparatory training may be called for. Such training would certainly be called for if we wanted machines to help us solve problems so complex that we could not even furnish precise instructions. According to Dr. Donald Mackay of King's College in London, one of the most imaginative physicists interested in mechanical learning: "We should be prepared to take as much trouble in guiding the formation of a machine's 'preferences' as in bringing up a child. If we bear that in mind, such a machine . . . could show consistent features which in a human being we should call a personality of its own."

We do not insult the brain by comparing it with the forerunners of such machinery. The brain at birth can be thought of as a partly wired device which grows and survives by completing its own wiring on the basis of experience. Clearly, it is many orders of magnitude more complex than the machines we have or are planning. If we still need proof, the facts concerning memory and abstract thinking and predicting should be ample to provide it. But the brain is enough like a machine to be investigated profitably by the same general methods we use to investigate other physical and chemical systems. New treatments and cures for nervous and mental diseases depend on such an approach.

Furthermore, in coming to grips with the difference between brains and machines we are being forced to re-examine traditional notions about thinking—and about the human-ness of human beings. For example, a new outlook might be obtained by considering whether or not calculating machines can be "creative" or "original." The big problem is to define in brass-tack terms just what you mean by those words. This is no academic point, because a computer can be designed to do anything you tell it to do. The only requirement is that you must make your commands sufficiently specific and clear-cut.

The commands for originality have not yet been specified. But if you defined "being original" precisely and prepared a set of highly detailed instructions for each step of the process, a machine could be built to be original within the scope of your definition. Your instructions would actually amount to a description of the machine itself, or at least of the things it would do. The machine would be original, not in the brain's way, but in the way you chose to conceive of originality. Its shortcomings would emphasize the shortcomings of your own concepts. It would help clarify your notions about thinking.

And this is one of the areas where we need fresh insights. The brain, considered as a working organ, presents science with a continuing challenge. There is something tantalizing about the fact that the most complex structure we know in the universe lies snugly packed inside our heads. It is a case of so near and yet so far. We have scaled our Everests, and there are experts who believe the conquest of space is mainly a matter of engineering and money. But we have yet to discover the mechanisms behind memory, predicting and all the other activities—named and unnamed—lumped together under the heading "mind." When this knowledge comes, and it is coming, we shall know ourselves and our universes better.

# MOVIE CHRONICLE: THE WESTERNER

ROBERT WARSHOW



*They that have power to hurt and will do none,  
That do not do the thing they most do show,  
Who, moving others, are themselves as stone,  
Unmoved, cold, and to temptation slow;  
They rightly do inherit heaven's graces,  
And husband nature's riches from expense;  
They are the lords and owners of their faces,  
Others but stewards of their excellence.*

The two most successful creations of American movies are the gangster and the Westerner: men with guns. Guns as physical objects, and the postures associated with their use, form the visual and emotional center of both types of films. I suppose this reflects the importance of guns in the fantasy life of Americans; but that is a less illuminating point that it appears to be.

The gangster movie, which no longer exists in its "classical" form, is a story of enterprise and success ending in precipitate failure. Success is conceived as an increasing power to work injury, it belongs to the city, and it is of course a form of evil (though the gangster's death, presented usually as "punishment," is perceived simply as defeat). The peculiarity of the gangster is his unceasing, nervous activity. The exact nature of his enterprises may remain vague, but his commit-

ment to enterprise is always clear, and all the more clear because he operates outside the field of utility. He is without culture, without manners, without leisure, or at any rate his leisure is likely to be spent in debauchery so compulsively aggressive as to seem only another aspect of his "work." But he is graceful, moving like a dancer among the crowded dangers of the city.

Like other tycoons, the gangster is crude in conceiving his ends but by no means inarticulate, on the contrary, he is usually expansive and noisy (the introspective gangster is a fairly recent development), and can state definitely what he wants to take over the North Side, to own a hundred suits, to be Number One. But new "frontiers" will present themselves infinitely, and by a rigid convention it is understood that as soon as he wishes to rest on his gains, he is on the way to destruction.

The gangster is lonely and melancholy, and can give the impression of a profound worldly wisdom. He appeals most to adolescents with their impatience and their feeling of being outsiders, but more generally he appeals to that side of all of us which refuses to believe in the "normal" possibilities of happiness and achievement; the gangster is the "no" to that great American "yes" which is stamped so big over our official culture and yet has so little to do with the way we really feel about our lives. But the gangster's loneliness and melancholy are not "authentic"; like everything else that belongs to him, they are not honestly come by: he is lonely and melancholy not because life ultimately demands such feelings but because he has put himself in a position where everybody wants to kill him and eventually somebody will. He is wide open and defenseless, incomplete because unable to accept any limits or come to terms with his own nature, fearful, loveless. And the story of his career is a nightmare inversion of the values of ambition and opportunity. From the window of Scarface's bullet-proof apartment can be seen an electric sign proclaiming: "The World Is Yours," and, if I remember, this sign is the last thing we see after Scarface lies dead in the street. In the end it is the gangster's weakness as much as his power and freedom that appeals to us, the world is not ours, but it is not his either, and in his death he "pays" for our fantasies, releasing us momentarily both from the concept of success, which he denies by caricaturing it, and from the need to succeed, which he shows to be dangerous.<sup>1</sup>

The Western hero, by contrast, is a figure of repose. He resembles the gangster in being lonely and to some degree melancholy. But his melancholy comes from the "simple" recognition that life is unavoidably serious, not from the disproportions of his own temperament. And his loneliness is organic, not imposed on him by his situation but

<sup>1</sup>I discussed gangster movies at greater length in an article called "The Gangster as Tragic Hero" (*PR*, February 1948).



belonging to him intimately and testifying to his completeness. The gangster must reject others violently or draw them violently to him. The Westerner is not thus compelled to seek love, he is prepared to accept it, perhaps, but he never asks of it more than it can give, and we see him constantly in situations where love is at best an irrelevance. If there is a woman he loves, she is usually unable to understand his motives, she is against killing and being killed, and he finds it impossible to explain to her that there is no point in being "against" these things they belong to his world.

Very often this woman is from the East and her failure to understand represents a clash of cultures. In the American mind, refinement, virtue, civilization, Christianity itself, are seen as feminine, and therefore women are often portrayed as possessing some kind of deeper wisdom, while the men, for all their apparent self-assurance, are fundamentally childish. But the West, lacking the graces of civilization, is the place "where men are men", in Western movies, men have the deeper wisdom and the women are children. Those women in the Western movies who share the hero's understanding of life are prostitutes (or, as they are usually presented, bar-room entertainers)—women, that is, who have come to understand in the most practical way how love can be an irrelevance, and therefore "fallen" women. The gangster, too, associates with prostitutes, but for him the important things about a prostitute are her passive availability and her costliness. She is part of his winnings. In Western movies, the important thing about a prostitute is her quasi-masculine independence: nobody owns her, nothing has to be explained to her, and she is not, like a virtuous woman, a "value" that demands to be protected. When the Westerner leaves the prostitute for a virtuous woman—for love—he is in fact forsaking a way of life, though the point of the choice is often obscured by having the prostitute killed by getting into the line of fire.

The Westerner is *par excellence* a man of leisure. Even when he wears the badge of a marshal or, more rarely, owns a ranch, he appears to be unemployed. We see him standing at a bar, or playing poker—a game which expresses perfectly his talent for remaining relaxed in the midst of tension—or perhaps camping out on the plains on some extraordinary errand. If he does own a ranch, it is in the background; we are not actually aware that he owns anything except his horse, his guns, and the one worn suit of clothing which is likely to remain unchanged all through the movie. It comes as a surprise to see him take money from his pocket or an extra shirt from his saddle-bags. As a rule we do not even know where he sleeps at night and don't think of asking. Yet it never occurs to us that he is a poor man; there is no poverty in Western movies, and really no wealth either. Those great cattle domains and shipments of gold which figure so

largely in the plots are moral and not material quantities, not the objects of contention but only its occasion. Possessions too are irrelevant.

Employment of some kind—usually unproductive—is always open to the Westerner, but when he accepts it, it is not because he needs to make a living, much less from any idea of “getting ahead.” Where could he want to “get ahead” to? By the time we see him, he is already “there”: he can ride a horse faultlessly, keep his countenance in the face of death, and draw his gun a little faster and shoot it a little straighter than anyone he is likely to meet. These are sharply defined acquirements, giving to the figure of the Westerner an apparent moral clarity which corresponds to the clarity of his physical image against his bare landscape; initially, at any rate, the Western movie presents itself as being without mystery, its whole universe comprehended in what we see on the screen.

Much of this apparent simplicity arises directly from those “cinematic” elements which have long been understood to give the Western theme its special appropriateness for the movies. the wide expanses of land, the free movement of men on horses As guns constitute the visible moral center of the Western movie, suggesting continually the possibility of violence, so land and horses represent the movie’s material basis, its sphere of action. But the land and the horses have also a moral significance: the physical freedom they represent belongs to the moral “openness” of the West—corresponding to the fact that guns are carried where they can be seen (And, as we shall see, the character of land and horses changes as the Western film becomes more complex )

The gangster’s world is less open, and his arts not so easily identifiable as the Westerner’s. Perhaps he too can keep his countenance, but the mask he wears is really no mask. its purpose is precisely to make evident the fact that he desperately wants to “get ahead” and will stop at nothing. Where the Westerner imposes himself by the appearance of unshakable control, the gangster’s pre-eminence lies in the suggestion that he may at any moment lose control; his strength is not in being able to shoot faster or straighter than others, but in being more willing to shoot. “Do it first,” says Scarface expounding his mode of operation, “and keep on doing it!” With the Westerner, it is a crucial point of honor *not* to “do it first”; his gun remains in its holster until the moment of combat.

There is no suggestion, however, that he draws the gun reluctantly. The Westerner could not fulfill himself if the moment did not finally come when he can shoot his enemy down. But because that moment is so thoroughly the expression of his being, it must be kept pure. He will not violate the accepted forms of combat though by doing so he could save a city. And he can wait. “When you call

me that—smile!”—the villain smiles weakly, soon he is laughing with horrible joviality, and the crisis is past. But it is allowed to pass because it must come again: sooner or later Trampas will “make his play,” and the Virginian will be ready for him.

What does the Westerner fight for? We know he is on the side of justice and order, and of course it can be said he fights for these things. But such broad aims never correspond exactly to his real motives; they only offer him his opportunity. The Westerner himself, when an explanation is asked of him (usually by a woman), is likely to say that he does what he “has to do.” If justice and order did not continually demand his protection, he would be without a calling. Indeed, we come upon him often in just that situation, as the reign of law settles over the West and he is forced to see that his day is over; those are the pictures which end with his death or with his departure for some more remote frontier. What he defends, at bottom, is the purity of his own image—in fact his honor. This is what makes him invulnerable. When the gangster is killed, his whole life is shown to have been a mistake, but the image the Westerner seeks to maintain can be presented as clearly in defeat as in victory: he fights not for advantage and not for the right, but to state what he is, and he must live in a world which permits that statement. The Westerner is the last gentleman, and the movies which over and over again tell his story are probably the last art form in which the concept of honor retains its strength.

Of course I do not mean to say that ideas of virtue and justice and courage have gone out of culture. Honor is more than these things: it is a style, concerned with harmonious appearances as much as with desirable consequences, and tending therefore toward the denial of life in favor of art. “Who hath it? he that died o’ Wednesday.” On the whole, a world that leans to Falstaff’s view is a more civilized and even, finally, a more graceful world. It is just the march of civilization that forces the Westerner to move on; and if we actually had to confront the question it might turn out that the woman who refuses to understand him is right as often as she is wrong. But we do not confront the question. Where the Westerner lives it is always about 1870—not the real 1870, either, or the real West—and he is killed or goes away when his position becomes problematical. The fact that he continues to hold our attention is evidence enough that, in his proper frame, he presents an image of personal nobility that is still real for us.

Clearly, this image easily becomes ridiculous: we need only look at William S. Hart or Tom Mix, who in the wooden absoluteness of their virtue represented little that an adult could take seriously, and doubtless such figures as Gene Autry or Roy Rogers are no better, though I confess I have seen none of their movies. Some film enthu-

siasts claim to find in the early, unsophisticated Westerns a "cinematic purity" that has since been lost; this idea is as valid, and finally as misleading, as T. S. Eliot's statement that *Everyman* is the only play in English that stays within the limitations of art. The truth is that the Westerner comes into the field of serious art only when his moral code, without ceasing to be compelling, is seen also to be imperfect. The Westerner at his best exhibits a moral ambiguity which darkens his image and saves him from absurdity; this ambiguity arises from the fact that, whatever his justifications, he is a killer of men.

In *The Virginian*, which is an archetypal Western movie as *Scarface* or *Little Caesar* are archetypal gangster movies, there is a lynching in which the hero (Gary Cooper), as leader of a posse, must supervise the hanging of his best friend for stealing cattle. With the growth of American "social consciousness," it is no longer possible to present a lynching in the movies unless the point is the illegality and injustice of the lynching itself; *The Ox-Bow Incident*, made in 1943, explicitly puts forward the newer point of view and can be regarded as a kind of "anti-Western." But in 1929, when *The Virginian* was made, the present inhibition about lynching was not yet in force, the justice, and therefore the necessity, of the hanging is never questioned—except by the schoolteacher from the East, whose refusal to understand serves as usual to set forth more sharply the deeper seriousness of the West. The Virginian is thus in a tragic dilemma where one moral absolute conflicts with another and the choice of either must leave a moral stain. If he had chosen to save his friend, he would have violated the image of himself that he had made essential to his existence, and the movie would have had to end with his death, for only by his death could the image have been restored. Having chosen instead to sacrifice his friend to the higher demands of the "code"—the only choice worthy of him, as even the friend understands—he is none the less stained by the killing, but what is needed now to set accounts straight is not his death but the death of the villain Trampas, the leader of the cattle thieves, who had escaped the posse and abandoned the Virginian's friend to his fate. Again the woman intervenes. Why must there be *more* killing? If the hero really loved her, he would leave town, refusing Trampas's challenge. What good will it be if Trampas should kill him? But the Virginian does once more what he "has to do," and in avenging his friend's death wipes out the stain on his own honor. Yet his victory cannot be complete. no death can be paid for and no stain truly wiped out; the movie is still a tragedy, for though the hero escapes with his life, he has been forced to confront the ultimate limits of his moral ideas.

This mature sense of limitation and unavoidable guilt is what gives

the Westerner a "right" to his melancholy. It is true that the gangster's story is also a tragedy—in certain formal ways more clearly a tragedy than the Westerner's—but it is a romantic tragedy, based on a hero whose defeat springs with almost mechanical inevitability from the outrageous presumption of his demands: the gangster is *bound* to go on until he is killed. The Westerner is a more classical figure, self-contained and limited to begin with, seeking not to extend his dominion but only to assert his personal value, and his tragedy lies in the fact that even this circumscribed demand cannot be fully realized. Since the Westerner is not a murderer but (most of the time) a man of virtue, and since he is always prepared for defeat, he retains his inner invulnerability and his story need not end with his death (and usually does not); but what we finally respond to is not his victory but his defeat.

Up to a point, it is plain that the deeper seriousness of the good Western films comes from the introduction of a realism, both physical and psychological, that was missing with Tom Mix and William S. Hart. As lines of age have come into Gary Cooper's face since *The Virginian*, so the outlines of the Western movie in general have become less smooth, its background more drab. The sun still beats upon the town, but the camera is likely now to take advantage of this illumination to seek out more closely the shabbiness of buildings and furniture, the loose, worn hang of clothing, the wrinkles and dirt of the faces. Once it has been discovered that the true theme of the Western movie is not the freedom and expansiveness of frontier life, but its limitations, its material bareness, the pressures of obligation, then even the landscape itself ceases to be quite the arena of free movement it once was, but becomes instead a great empty waste, cutting down more often than it exaggerates the stature of the horseman who rides across it. We are more likely now to see the Westerner struggling against the obstacles of the physical world (as in the wonderful scenes on the desert and among the rocks in *The Last Posse*) than carelessly surmounting them. Even the horses, no longer the "friends" of man or the inspired chargers of knight-errantry, have lost much of the moral significance that once seemed to belong to them in their careering across the screen. It seems to me the horses grow tired and stumble more often than they did, and that we see them less frequently at the gallop.

In *The Gunfighter*, a remarkable film of a couple of years ago, the landscape has virtually disappeared. Most of the action takes place indoors, in a cheerless saloon where a tired "bad man" (Gregory Peck) contemplates the waste of his life, to be senselessly killed at the end by a vicious youngster setting off on the same futile path. The movie is done in cold, quiet tones of gray, and every object in it—

faces, clothing, a table, the hero's heavy mustache—is given an air of uncompromising authenticity, suggesting those dim photographs of the nineteenth-century West in which Wyatt Earp, say, turns out to be a blank untidy figure posing awkwardly before some uninteresting building. This “authenticity,” to be sure, is only aesthetic; the chief fact about nineteenth-century photographs, to my eyes at any rate, is how stonily they refuse to yield up the truth. But that limitation is just what is needed by preserving some hint of the rigidity of archaic photography (only in tone and décor, never in composition), *The Gunfighter* can permit us to feel that we are looking at a more “real” West than the one the movies have accustomed us to—harder, duller, less “romantic”—and yet without forcing us outside the boundaries which give the Western movie its validity.

We come upon the hero of *The Gunfighter* at the end of a career in which he has never upheld justice and order, and has been at times, apparently, an actual criminal; in this case, it is clear that the hero has been wrong and the woman who has rejected his way of life has been right. He is thus without any of the larger justifications, and knows himself a ruined man. There can be no question of his “redeeming” himself in any socially constructive way. He is too much the victim of his own reputation to turn marshal as one of his old friends has done, and he is not offered the sentimental solution of a chance to give up his life for some good end, the whole point is that he exists outside the field of social value. Indeed, if we were once allowed to see him in the days of his “success,” he might become a figure like the gangster, for his career has been aggressively “anti-social” and the practical problem he faces is the gangster's problem: there will always be somebody trying to kill him. Yet it is obviously absurd to speak of him as “anti-social,” not only because we do not see him acting as a criminal, but more fundamentally because we do not see his milieu as a society. Of course it has its “social problems” and a kind of static history: civilization is always just at the point of driving out the old freedom, there are women and children to represent the possibility of a settled life, and there is the marshal, a bad man turned good, determined to keep at least his area of jurisdiction at peace. But these elements are not, in fact, a part of the film's “realism,” even though they come out of the real history of the West; they belong to the conventions of the form, to that accepted framework which makes the film possible in the first place, and they exist not to provide a standard by which the gunfighter can be judged, but only to set him off. The true “civilization” of the Western movie is always embodied in an individual, good or bad is more a matter of personal bearing than of social consequences, and the conflict of good and bad is a duel between two men. Deeply troubled and obviously doomed, the gunfighter is the Western hero still, perhaps

all the more because his value must express itself entirely in his own being—in his presence, the way he holds our eyes—and in contradiction to the facts. No matter what he has done, he *looks* right, and he remains invulnerable because, without acknowledging anyone else's right to judge him, he has judged his own failure and has already assimilated it, understanding—as no one else understands except the marshal and the bar-room girl—that he can do nothing but play out the drama of the gun fight again and again until the time comes when it will be he who gets killed. What “redeems” him is that he no longer believes in this drama and nevertheless will continue to play his role perfectly: the pattern is all.

The proper function of realism in the Western movie can only be to deepen the line of that pattern. It is an art form for connoisseurs, where the spectator derives his pleasure from the appreciation of minor variations within the working out of a pre-established order. One does not want too much novelty. It comes as a shock, for instance, when the hero is made to operate without a gun, as has been done in several pictures (e.g., *Destry Rides Again*), and our uneasiness is allayed only when he is finally compelled to put his “pacifism” aside. If the hero can be shown to be troubled, complex, fallible, even eccentric, or the villain given some psychological taint or, better, some evocative physical mannerism, to shade the colors of his villainy, that is all to the good. Indeed, that kind of variation is absolutely necessary to keep the type from becoming sterile, we do not want to see the same movie over and over again, only the same form. But when the impulse toward realism is extended into a “reinterpretation” of the West as a developed society, drawing our eyes away from the hero if only to the extent of showing him as the one dominant figure in a complex social order, then the pattern is broken and the West itself begins to be uninteresting. If the “social problems” of the frontier are to be the movie's chief concern, there is no longer any point in re-examining these problems twenty times a year; they have been solved, and the people for whom they once were real are dead. Moreover, the hero himself, still the film's central figure, now tends to become its one unassimilable element, since he is the most “unreal.”

*The Ox-Bow Incident*, by denying the convention of the lynching, presents us with a modern “social drama” and evokes a corresponding response, but in doing so it almost makes the Western setting irrelevant, a mere backdrop of beautiful scenery. (It is significant that *The Ox-Bow Incident* has no hero; a hero would have to stop the lynching or be killed in trying to stop it, and then the “problem” of lynching would no longer be central.) Even in *The Gunfighter* the women and children are a little too much in evidence, threatening constantly to become a real focus of concern instead of

simply part of the given framework; and the young tough who kills the hero has too much the air of juvenile criminality. the hero himself could never have been like that, and the idea of a cycle being repeated therefore loses its sharpness. But the most striking example of the confusion created by a too conscientious "social" realism is in the celebrated *High Noon*.

In *High Noon* we find Gary Cooper still the upholder of order that he was in *The Virginian*, but twenty-four years older, stooped, slower moving, awkward, his face lined, the flesh sagging, a less beautiful and weaker figure, but with the suggestion of greater depth that belongs almost automatically to age. Like the hero of *The Gunfighter*, he no longer has to assert his character and is no longer interested in the drama of combat; it is hard to imagine that he might once have been so youthful as to say, "When you call me that—smile!" In fact, when we come upon him he is hanging up his guns and his marshal's badge in order to begin a new, peaceful life with his bride, who is a Quaker. But then the news comes that a man he had sent to prison has been pardoned and will get to town on the noon train, three friends of this man have come to wait for him at the station, and when the freed convict arrives the four of them will come to kill the marshal. He is thus trapped; the bride will object, the hero himself will waver much more than he would have done twenty-four years ago, but in the end he will play out the drama because it is what he "has to do." All this belongs to the established form (there is even the "fallen woman" who understands the marshal's position as his wife does not). Leaving aside the crudity of building up suspense by means of the clock, the actual Western drama of *High Noon* is well handled and forms a good companion piece to *The Virginian*, showing in both conception and technique the ways in which the Western movie has naturally developed.

But there is a second drama along with the first. As the marshal sets out to find deputies to help him deal with the four gunmen, we are taken through the various social strata of the town, each group in turn refusing its assistance out of cowardice, malice, irresponsibility, or venality. With this we are in the field of "social drama"—of a very low order, incidentally, altogether unconvincing and displaying a vulgar anti-populism that has marred some other movies of Stanley Kramer's. But the falsity of the "social drama" is less important than the fact that it does not belong in the movie to begin with. The technical problem was to make it necessary for the marshal to face his enemies alone, to explain *why* the other townspeople are not at his side is to raise a question which does not exist in the proper frame of the Western movie, where the hero is "naturally" alone and it is only necessary to contrive the physical absence of those who might be his allies, if any contrivance is needed at all. In addition, though



the hero of *High Noon* proves himself a better man than all around him, the actual effect of this contrast is to lessen his stature: he becomes only a rejected man of virtue. In our final glimpse of him, as he rides away through the town where he has spent most of his life without really imposing himself on it, he is a pathetic rather than a tragic figure. And his departure has another meaning as well; the "social drama" has no place for him.

But there is also a different way of violating the Western form. This is to yield entirely to its static quality as legend and to the "cinematic" temptations of its landscape, the horses, the quiet men. John Ford's famous *Stagecoach* (1938) had much of this unhappy preoccupation with style, and the same director's *My Darling Clementine* (1946), a soft and beautiful movie about Wyatt Earp, goes further along the same path, offering indeed a superficial accuracy of historical reconstruction, but so loving in execution as to destroy the outlines of the Western legend, assimilating it to the more sentimental legend of rural America and making the hero a more dangerous Mr. Deeds. (*Powder River*, a recent "routine" Western shamelessly copied from *My Darling Clementine*, is in most ways a better film, lacking the benefit of a serious director, it is necessarily more concerned with drama than with style.)

The highest expression of this aestheticizing tendency is in George Stevens' *Shane*, where the legend of the West is virtually reduced to its essentials and then fixed in the dreamy clarity of a fairy tale. There never was so broad and bare and lovely a landscape as Stevens puts before us, or so unimaginably comfortless a "town" as the little group of buildings on the prairie to which the settlers must come for their supplies and to buy a drink. The mere physical progress of the film, following the style of *A Place in the Sun*, is so deliberately graceful that everything seems to be happening at the bottom of a clear lake. The hero (Alan Ladd) is hardly a man at all, but something like the Spirit of the West, beautiful in fringed buckskins. He emerges mysteriously from the plains, breathing sweetness and a melancholy which is no longer simply the Westerner's natural response to experience but has taken on spirituality, and when he has accomplished his mission, meeting and destroying in the black figure of Jack Palance a Spirit of Evil just as metaphysical as his own embodiment of virtue, he fades away again into the more distant West, a man whose "day is over," leaving behind the wondering little boy who might have imagined the whole story. The choice of Alan Ladd to play the leading role is alone an indication of the film's tendency. Actors like Gary Cooper or Gregory Peck are in themselves, as material objects, "realistic," seeming to bear in their bodies and their faces mortality, limitation, the knowledge of good and evil. Ladd is a more "aesthetic" object, with some of the "universality" of a piece of sculpture; his

special quality is in his physical smoothness and serenity, unworldly and yet not innocent, but suggesting that no experience can really touch him. Stevens has tried to freeze the Western myth once and for all in the immobility of Alan Ladd's countenance. If *Shane* were "right," and fully successful, it might be possible to say there was no point in making any more Western movies; once the hero is apotheosized, variation and development are closed off.

*Shane* is not "right," but it is still true that the possibilities of fruitful variation in the Western movie are limited. The form can keep its freshness through endless repetitions only because of the special character of the film medium, where the physical difference between one object and another—above all, between one actor and another—is of such enormous importance, serving the function that is served by the variety of language in the perpetuation of literary types. In this sense, the "vocabulary" of films is much larger than that of literature and falls more readily into pleasing and significant arrangements. (That may explain why the middle levels of excellence are more easily reached in the movies than in literary forms, and perhaps also why the status of the movies as art is constantly being called into question.) But the advantage of this almost automatic particularity belongs to all films alike. Why does the Western movie especially have such a hold on our imagination?

Chiefly, I think, because it offers a serious orientation to the problem of violence such as can be found almost nowhere else in our culture. One of the well-known peculiarities of modern civilized opinion is its refusal to acknowledge the value of violence. This refusal is a virtue, but like many virtues it involves a certain willful blindness and it encourages hypocrisy. We train ourselves to be shocked or bored by cultural images of violence, and our very concept of heroism tends to be a passive one: we are less drawn to the brave young men who kill large numbers of our enemies than to the heroic prisoners who endure torture without capitulating. In art, though we may still be able to understand and participate in the values of the *Iliad*, a modern writer like Ernest Hemingway we find somewhat embarrassing. There is no doubt that he stirs us, but we cannot help recognizing also that he is a little childish. And in the criticism of popular culture, where the educated observer is usually under the illusion that he has nothing at stake, the presence of images of violence is often assumed to be in itself a sufficient ground for condemnation.

These attitudes, however, have not reduced the element of violence in our culture but, if anything, have helped to free it from moral control by letting it take on the aura of "emancipation." The celebration of acts of violence is left more and more to the irresponsible: on the higher cultural levels to writers like Céline, and lower

down to Mickey Spillane or Horace McCoy, or to the comic books, television, and the movies. The gangster movie, with its numerous variations, belongs to this cultural "underground" which sets forth the attractions of violence in the face of all our higher social attitudes. It is a more "modern" genre than the Western, perhaps even more profound, because it confronts industrial society on its own ground—the city—and because, like much of our advanced art, it gains its effects by a gross insistence on its own narrow logic. But it is anti-social, resting on fantasies of irresponsible freedom. If we are brought finally to acquiesce in the denial of these fantasies, it is only because they have been shown to be dangerous, not because they have given way to a better vision of behavior.<sup>2</sup>

In war movies, to be sure, it is possible to present the uses of violence within a framework of responsibility. But there is the disadvantage that modern war is a co-operative enterprise; its violence is largely impersonal, and heroism belongs to the group more than to the individual. The hero of a war movie is most often simply a leader, and his superiority is likely to be expressed in a denial of the heroic: you are not supposed to be brave, you are supposed to get the job done and stay alive (this too, of course, is a kind of heroic posture, but a new—and "practical"—one). At its best, the war movie may represent a more civilized point of view than the Western, and if it were not continually marred by ideological sentimentality we might hope to find it developing into a higher form of drama. But it cannot supply the values we seek in the Western.

Those values are in the image of a single man who wears a gun on his thigh. The gun tells us that he lives in a world of violence, and even that he "believes in violence." But the drama is one of self-restraint: the moment of violence must come in its own time and according to its special laws, or else it is valueless. There is little cruelty in Western movies, and little sentimentality, our eyes are not focused on the sufferings of the defeated but on the deportment of the hero. Really, it is not violence at all which is the "point" of the Western movie, but a certain image of man, a style, which expresses itself most clearly in violence. Watch a child with his toy guns and you will see: what most interests him is not (as we so much fear) the fantasy of hurting others, but to work out how a man might look when he shoots or is shot. A hero is one who looks like a hero.

Whatever the limitations of such an idea in experience, it has al-

<sup>2</sup>I am not concerned here with the actual social consequences of gangster movies, though I suspect they could not have been so pernicious as they were thought to be. Some of the compromises introduced to avoid the supposed bad effects of the old gangster movies may be, if anything, more dangerous, for the sadistic violence that once belonged only to the gangster is now commonly enlisted on the side of the law and thus goes undefeated, allowing us (if we wish) to find in the movies a sort of "confirmation" of our fantasies.

ways been valid in art, and has a special validity in an art where appearances are everything. The Western hero is necessarily an archaic figure; we do not really believe in him and would not have him step out of his rigidly conventionalized background. But his archaicism does not take away from his power; on the contrary, it adds to it by keeping him just a little beyond the reach both of common sense and of absolutized emotion, the two usual impulses of our art. And he has, after all, his own kind of relevance. He is there to remind us of the possibility of style in an age which has put on itself the burden of pretending that style has no meaning, and, in the midst of our anxieties over the problem of violence, to suggest that even in killing or being killed we are not freed from the necessity of establishing satisfactory modes of behavior. Above all, the movies in which the Westerner plays out his role preserve for us the pleasures of a complete and self-contained drama—and one which still effortlessly crosses the boundaries which divide our culture—in a time when other, more consciously serious art forms are increasingly complex, uncertain, and ill-defined.

# THE NATURE OF SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE

ERICH FROMM



Let us assume you want to tell someone the difference between the taste of white wine and red wine. This may seem quite simple to you. *You* know the difference very well; why should it not be easy to explain it to someone else? Yet you find the greatest difficulty putting this taste difference into words. And probably you will end up by saying, "Now look here, I can't explain it to you. Just drink red wine and then white wine, and you will know what the difference is." You have no difficulty in finding words to explain the most complicated machine, and yet words seem to be futile to describe a simple taste experience.

Are we not confronted with the same difficulty when we try to explain a feeling experience? Let us take a mood in which you feel lost, deserted, where the world looks gray, a little frightening though not really dangerous. You want to describe this mood to a friend, but again you find yourself groping for words and eventually feel that nothing you have said is an adequate explanation of the many nuances of the mood. The following night you have a dream. You see yourself in the outskirts of a city just before dawn, the streets are empty except for a milk wagon, the houses look poor, the surroundings are unfamiliar, you have no means of accustomed transportation to places familiar to you and where you feel you belong. When you wake up and remember the dream, it occurs to you that the

feeling you had in that dream was exactly the feeling of lostness and grayness you tried to describe to your friend the day before. It is just one picture, whose visualization took less than a second. And yet this picture is a more vivid and precise description than you could have given by talking *about* it at length. The picture you see in the dream is a *symbol* of something you felt.

What is a symbol? A symbol is often defined as "something that stands for something else." This definition seems rather disappointing. It becomes more interesting, however, if we concern ourselves with those symbols which are sensory expressions of seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, standing for a "something else" which is an inner experience, a feeling or thought. A symbol of this kind is something outside ourselves, that which it symbolizes is something inside ourselves. Symbolic language is language in which we express inner experience as if it were a sensory experience, as if it were something we were doing or something that was done to us in the world of things. Symbolic language is language in which the world outside is a symbol of the world inside, a symbol for our souls and our minds.

If we define a symbol as "something which stands for something else," the crucial question is: *What is the specific connection between the symbol and that which it symbolizes?*

In answer to this question we can differentiate between three kinds of symbols: the *conventional*, the *accidental* and the *universal* symbol. As will become apparent presently, only the latter two kinds of symbols express inner experiences as if they were sensory experiences, and only they have the elements of symbolic language.

The *conventional* symbol is the best known of the three, since we employ it in everyday language. If we see the word "table" or hear the sound "table," the letters T-A-B-L-E stand for something else. They stand for the thing table that we see, touch and use. What is the connection between the *word* "table" and the *thing* "table"? Is there any inherent relationship between them? Obviously not. The thing table has nothing to do with the sound table, and the only reason the word symbolizes the thing is the convention of calling this particular thing by a particular name. We learn this connection as children by the repeated experience of hearing the word in reference to the thing until a lasting association is formed so that we don't have to think to find the right word.

There are some words, however, where the association is not only conventional. When we say "phooey," for instance, we make with our lips a movement of dispelling the air quickly. It is an expression of disgust in which our mouths participate. By this quick expulsion of air we imitate and thus express our intention to expel something, to get it out of our system. In this case, as in some others,

the symbol has an inherent connection with the feeling it symbolizes. But even if we assume that originally many or even all words had their origins in some such inherent connection between symbol and the symbolized, most words no longer have this meaning for us when we learn a language.

Words are not the only illustration for conventional symbols, although they are the most frequent and best-known ones. Pictures also can be conventional symbols. A flag, for instance, may stand for a specific country, and yet there is no connection between the specific colors and the country for which they stand. They have been accepted as denoting that particular country, and we translate the visual impression of the flag into the concept of that country, again on conventional grounds. Some pictorial symbols are not entirely conventional; for example, the cross. The cross can be merely a conventional symbol of the Christian church and in that respect no different from a flag. But the specific content of the cross referring to Jesus' death or, beyond that, to the interpenetration of the material and spiritual planes, puts the connection between the symbol and what it symbolizes beyond the level of mere conventional symbols.

The very opposite to the conventional symbol is the *accidental* symbol, although they have one thing in common: there is no intrinsic relationship between the symbol and that which it symbolizes. Let us assume that someone has had a saddening experience in a certain city; when he hears the name of that city, he will easily connect the name with a mood of sadness, just as he would connect it with a mood of joy had his experience been a happy one. Quite obviously there is nothing in the nature of the city that is either sad or joyful. It is the individual experience connected with the city that makes it a symbol of a mood.

The same reaction could occur in connection with a house, a street, a certain dress, certain scenery, or anything once connected with a specific mood. We might find ourselves dreaming that we are in a certain city. In fact, there may be no particular mood connected with it in the dream; all we see is a street or even simply the name of the city. We ask ourselves why we happened to think of that city in our sleep and may discover that we had fallen asleep in a mood similar to the one symbolized by the city. The picture in the dream represents this mood, the city "stands for" the mood once experienced in it. Here the connection between the symbol and the experience symbolized is entirely accidental.

In contrast to the conventional symbol, the accidental symbol cannot be shared by anyone else except as we relate the events connected with the symbol. For this reason accidental symbols are rarely used in myths, fairy tales, or works of art written in symbolic language because they are not communicable unless the writer adds a lengthy

comment to each symbol he uses. In dreams, however, accidental symbols are frequent, and later in this book I shall explain the method of understanding them.

The *universal* symbol is one in which there is an intrinsic relationship between the symbol and that which it represents. We have already given one example, that of the outskirts of the city. The sensory experience of a deserted, strange, poor environment has indeed a significant relationship to a mood of lostness and anxiety. True enough, if we have never been in the outskirts of a city we could not use that symbol, just as the word "table" would be meaningless had we never seen a table. This symbol is meaningful only to city dwellers and would be meaningless to people living in cultures that have no big cities. Many other universal symbols, however, are rooted in the experience of every human being. Take, for instance, the symbol of fire. We are fascinated by certain qualities of fire in a fireplace. First of all, by its aliveness. It changes continuously, it moves all the time, and yet there is constancy in it. It remains the same without being the same. It gives the impression of power, of energy, of grace and lightness. It is as if it were dancing and had an inexhaustible source of energy. When we use fire as a symbol, we describe the inner experience characterized by the same elements which we notice in the sensory experience of fire, the mood of energy, lightness, movement, grace, gaiety—sometimes one, sometimes another of these elements being predominant in the feeling.

Similar in some ways and different in others is the symbol of water—of the ocean or of the stream. Here, too, we find the blending of change and permanence, of constant movement and yet of permanence. We also feel the quality of aliveness, continuity and energy. But there is a difference, where fire is adventurous, quick, exciting, water is quiet, slow and steady. Fire has an element of surprise; water an element of predictability. Water symbolizes the mood of aliveness, too, but one which is "heavier," "slower," and more comforting than exciting.

That a phenomenon of the physical world can be the adequate expression of an inner experience, that the world of things can be a symbol of the world of the mind, is not surprising. We all know that our bodies express our minds. Blood rushes to our heads when we are furious, it rushes away from them when we are afraid, our hearts beat more quickly when we are angry, and the whole body has a different tonus if we are happy from the one it has when we are sad. We express our moods by our facial expressions and our attitudes and feelings by movements and gestures so precise that others recognize them more accurately from our gestures than from our words. Indeed, the body is a symbol—and not an allegory—of the



mind. Deeply and genuinely felt emotion, and even any genuinely felt thought, is expressed in our whole organism. In the case of the universal symbol, we find the same connection between mental and physical experience. Certain physical phenomena suggest by their very nature certain emotional and mental experiences, and we express emotional experiences in the language of physical experiences, that is to say, symbolically.

The universal symbol is the only one in which the relationship between the symbol and that which is symbolized is not coincidental but intrinsic. It is rooted in the experience of the affinity between an emotion or thought, on the one hand, and a sensory experience, on the other. It can be called universal because it is shared by all men, in contrast not only to the accidental symbol, which is by its very nature entirely personal, but also to the conventional symbol, which is restricted to a group of people sharing the same convention. The universal symbol is rooted in the properties of our body, our senses, and our mind, which are common to all men and, therefore, not restricted to individuals or to specific groups. Indeed, the language of the universal symbol is the one common tongue developed by the human race, a language which it forgot before it succeeded in developing a universal conventional language.

There is no need to speak of a racial inheritance in order to explain the universal character of symbols. Every human being who shares the essential features of bodily and mental equipment with the rest of mankind is capable of speaking and understanding the symbolic language that is based upon these common properties. Just as we do not need to learn to cry when we are sad or to get red in the face when we are angry, and just as these reactions are not restricted to any particular race or group of people, symbolic language does not have to be learned and is not restricted to any segment of the human race. Evidence for this is to be found in the fact that symbolic language as it is employed in myths and dreams is found in all cultures in so-called primitive as well as such highly developed cultures as Egypt and Greece. Furthermore, the symbols used in these various cultures are strikingly similar since they all go back to the basic sensory as well as emotional experiences shared by men of all cultures. Added evidence is to be found in recent experiments in which people who had no knowledge of the theory of dream interpretation were able, under hypnosis, to interpret the symbolism of their dreams without any difficulty. After emerging from the hypnotic state and being asked to interpret the same dreams, they were puzzled and said, "Well, there is no meaning to them—it is just nonsense."

The foregoing statement needs qualification, however. Some symbols differ in meaning according to the difference in their realistic

significance in various cultures. For instance, the function and consequently the meaning of the sun is different in northern countries and in tropical countries. In northern countries, where water is plentiful, all growth depends on sufficient sunshine. The sun is the warm, life-giving, protecting, loving power. In the Near East, where the heat of the sun is much more powerful, the sun is a dangerous and even threatening power from which man must protect himself, while water is felt to be the source of all life and the main condition for growth. We may speak of dialects of universal symbolic language, which are determined by those differences in natural conditions which cause certain symbols to have a different meaning in different regions of the earth.

Quite different from these "symbolic dialects" is the fact that many symbols have more than one meaning in accordance with different kinds of experiences which can be connected with one and the same natural phenomenon. Let us take up the symbol of fire again. If we watch fire in the fireplace, which is a source of pleasure and comfort, it is expressive of a mood of aliveness, warmth, and pleasure. But if we see a building or forest on fire, it conveys to us an experience of threat or terror, of the powerlessness of man against the elements of nature. Fire, then, can be the symbolic representation of inner aliveness and happiness as well as of fear, powerlessness, or of one's own destructive tendencies. The same holds true of the symbol water. Water can be a most destructive force when it is whipped up by a storm or when a swollen river floods its banks. Therefore, it can be the symbolic expression of horror and chaos as well as of comfort and peace.

Another illustration of the same principle is a symbol of a valley. The valley enclosed between mountains can arouse in us the feeling of security and comfort, of protection against all dangers from the outside. But the protecting mountains can also mean isolating walls which do not permit us to get out of the valley and thus the valley can become a symbol of imprisonment. The particular meaning of the symbol in any given place can only be determined from the whole context in which the symbol appears, and in terms of the predominant experiences of the person using the symbol.

A good illustration of the function of the universal symbol is a story, written in symbolic language, which is known to almost everyone in Western culture. the Book of Jonah. Jonah has heard God's voice telling him to go to Nineveh and preach to its inhabitants to give up their evil ways lest they be destroyed. Jonah cannot help hearing God's voice and that is why he is a prophet. But he is an unwilling prophet, who, though knowing what he should do, tries to run away from the command of God (or, as we may say, the voice of his conscience). He is a man who does not care for other

human beings. He is a man with a strong sense of law and order, but without love<sup>1</sup>

How does the story express the inner processes in Jonah?

We are told that Jonah went down to Joppa and found a ship which should bring him to Tarshish. In mid-ocean a storm rises and, while everyone else is excited and afraid, Jonah goes into the ship's belly and falls into a deep sleep. The sailors, believing that God must have sent the storm because someone on the ship is to be punished, wake Jonah, who had told them he was trying to flee from God's command. He tells them to take him and cast him forth into the sea and that the sea would then become calm. The sailors (betraying a remarkable sense of humanity by first trying everything else before following his advice) eventually take Jonah and cast him into the sea, which immediately stops raging. Jonah is swallowed by a big fish and stays in the fish's belly three days and three nights. He prays to God to free him from this prison. God makes the fish vomit out Jonah unto the dry land and Jonah goes to Nineveh, fulfills God's command, and thus saves the inhabitants of the city.

The story is told as if these events had actually happened. However, it is written in symbolic language and all the realistic events described are symbols for the inner experiences of the hero. We find a sequence of symbols which follow one another: going into the ship, going into the ship's belly, falling asleep, being in the ocean, and being in the fish's belly. All these symbols stand for the same inner experience: for a condition of being protected and isolated, of safe withdrawal from communication with other human beings. They represent what could be represented in another symbol, the fetus in the mother's womb. Different as the ship's belly, deep sleep, the ocean, and a fish's belly are realistically, they are expressive of the same inner experience, of the blending between protection and isolation.

In the manifest story events happen in space and time: *first*, going into the ship's belly, *then*, falling asleep; *then*, being thrown into the ocean; *then*, being swallowed by the fish. One thing happens after the other and, although some events are obviously unrealistic, the story has its own logical consistency in terms of time and space. But if we understand that the writer did not intend to tell us the story of external events, but of the inner experience of a man torn between his conscience and his wish to escape from his inner voice, it becomes clear that his various actions following one after the other express the same mood in him; and that *sequence in time* is expressive of a *growing intensity* of the same feeling. In his attempt to escape

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the discussion of Jonah in E. Fromm's *Man for Himself*, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1947, where the story is discussed from the point of view of the meaning of love.

from his obligation to his fellow men Jonah isolates himself more and more until, in the belly of the fish, the protective element has so given way to the imprisoning element that he can stand it no longer and is forced to pray to God to be released from where he had put himself. (This is a mechanism which we find so characteristic of neurosis. An attitude is assumed as a defense against a danger, but then it grows far beyond its original defense function and becomes a neurotic symptom from which the person tries to be relieved.) Thus Jonah's escape into protective isolation ends in the terror of being imprisoned, and he takes up his life at the point where he had tried to escape.

There is another difference between the logic of the manifest and of the latent story. In the manifest story the logical connection is one of causality of external events. Jonah wants to go overseas *because* he wants to flee from God, he falls asleep *because* he is tired, he is thrown overboard *because* he is supposed to be the reason for the storm, and he is swallowed by the fish *because* there are man-eating fish in the ocean. One event occurs because of a previous event. (The last part of the story is unrealistic but not illogical.) But in the latent story the logic is different. The various events are related to each other by their association with the same inner experience. What appears to be a causal sequence of external events stands for a connection of experiences linked with each other by their association in terms of inner events. This is as logical as the manifest story—but it is a logic of a different kind.

# **“USELESS” KNOWLEDGE**

BERTRAND RUSSELL



Francis Bacon, a man who rose to eminence by betraying his friends, asserted, no doubt as one of the ripe lessons of experience, that “knowledge is power.” But this is not true of *all* knowledge. Sir Thomas Browne wished to know what song the sirens sang, but if he had ascertained this it would not have enabled him to rise from being a magistrate to being High Sheriff of his county. The sort of knowledge that Bacon had in mind was that which we call scientific. In emphasizing the importance of science, he was belatedly carrying on the tradition of the Arabs and the early Middle Ages, according to which knowledge consisted mainly of astrology, alchemy, and pharmacology, all of which were branches of science. A learned man was one who, having mastered these studies, had acquired magical powers. In the early eleventh century, Pope Silvester II, for no reason except that he read books, was universally believed to be a magician in league with the devil. Prospero, who in Shakespeare’s time was a mere phantasy, represented what had been for centuries the generally received conception of a learned man, so far at least as his powers of sorcery were concerned. Bacon believed—rightly, as we now know—that science could provide a more powerful magician’s wand than any that had been dreamed of by the necromancers of former ages.

The renaissance, which was at its height in England at the time of Bacon, involved a revolt against the utilitarian conception of knowledge. The Greeks had acquired a familiarity with Homer, as

we do with music-hall songs, because they enjoyed him, and without feeling that they were engaged in the pursuit of learning. But the men of the sixteenth century could not begin to understand him without first absorbing a very considerable amount of linguistic erudition. They admired the Greeks, and did not wish to be shut out from their pleasures; they therefore copied them, both in reading the classics and in other less avowable ways. Learning, in the renaissance, was part of the *joie de vivre*, just as much as drinking or love-making. And this was true not only of literature, but also of sterner studies. Everyone knows the story of Hobbe's first contact with Euclid: opening the book, by chance, at the theorem of Pythagoras, he exclaimed, "By God, this is impossible," and proceeded to read the proofs backwards until, reaching the axioms, he became convinced. No one can doubt that this was for him a voluptuous moment, unsullied by the thought of the utility of geometry in measuring fields.

It is true that the renaissance found a practical use for the ancient languages in connection with theology. One of the earliest results of the new feeling for classical Latin was the discrediting of the forged decretals and the donation of Constantine. The inaccuracies which were discovered in the Vulgate and the Septuagint made Greek and Hebrew a necessary part of the controversial equipment of Protestant divines. The republican maxims of Greece and Rome were invoked to justify the resistance of Puritans to the Stuarts and of Jesuits to monarchs who had thrown off allegiance to the Pope. But all this was an effect, rather than a cause, of the revival of classical learning, which had been in full swing in Italy for nearly a century before Luther. The main motive of the renaissance was mental delight, the restoration of a certain richness and freedom in art and speculation which had been lost while ignorance and superstition kept the mind's eye in blinkers.

The Greeks, it was found, had devoted a part of their attention to matters not purely literary or artistic, such as philosophy, geometry, and astronomy. These studies, therefore, were respectable, but other sciences were more open to question. Medicine, it was true, was dignified by the names of Hippocrates and Galen; but in the intervening period it had become almost confined to Arabs and Jews, and inextricably intertwined with magic. Hence the dubious reputation of such men as Paracelsus. Chemistry was in even worse odour, and hardly became respectable until the eighteenth century.

In this way it was brought about that knowledge of Greek and Latin, with a smattering of geometry and perhaps astronomy, came to be considered the intellectual equipment of a gentleman. The Greeks disdained the practical applications of geometry, and it was only in their decadence that they found a use for astronomy in the

guise of astrology. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in the main, studied mathematics with Hellenic disinterestedness, and tended to ignore the sciences which had been degraded by their connection with sorcery. A gradual change towards a wider and more practical conception of knowledge, which was going on throughout the eighteenth century, was suddenly accelerated at the end of that period by the French Revolution and the growth of machinery, of which the former gave a blow to gentlemanly culture while the latter offered new and astonishing scope for the exercise of ungentlemanly skill. Throughout the last hundred and fifty years, men have questioned more and more vigorously the value of "useless" knowledge, and have come increasingly to believe that the only knowledge worth having is that which is applicable to some part of the economic life of the community.

In countries such as France and England, which have a traditional educational system, the utilitarian view of knowledge has only partially prevailed. There are still, for example, professors of Chinese in the universities who read the Chinese classics but are unacquainted with the works of Sun Yet-sen, which created modern China. There are still men who know ancient history in so far as it was related by authors whose style was pure, that is to say up to Alexander in Greece and Nero in Rome, but refuse to know the much more important later history because of the literary inferiority of the historians who related it. Even in France and England, however, the old tradition is dying, and in more up-to-date countries, such as Russia and the United States, it is utterly extinct. In America, for example, educational commissions point out that fifteen hundred words are all that most people employ in business correspondence, and therefore suggest that all others should be avoided in the school curriculum. Basic English, a British invention, goes still further, and reduces the necessary vocabulary to eight hundred words. The conception of speech as something capable of aesthetic value is dying out, and it is coming to be thought that the sole purpose of words is to convey practical information. In Russia the pursuit of practical aims is even more whole-hearted than in America. All that is taught in educational institutions is intended to serve some obvious purpose in education or government. The only escape is afforded by theology: the sacred scriptures must be studied by some in the original German, and a few professors must learn philosophy in order to defend dialectical materialism against the criticisms of bourgeois metaphysicians. But as orthodoxy becomes more firmly established, even this tiny loophole will be closed.

Knowledge, everywhere, is coming to be regarded not as a good in itself, or as a means of creating a broad and humane outlook on life in general, but as merely an ingredient in technical skill. This is part of the greater integration of society which has been brought

about by scientific technique and military necessity. There is more economic and political interdependence than there was in former times, and therefore there is more social pressure to compel a man to live in a way that his neighbours think useful. Educational establishments, except those for the very rich, or (in England) such as have become invulnerable through antiquity, are not allowed to spend their money as they like, but must satisfy the State that they are serving a useful purpose by imparting skill and instilling loyalty. This is part and parcel of the same movement which has led to compulsory military service, boy scouts, the organization of political parties, and the dissemination of political passion by the Press. We are all more aware of our fellow-citizens than we used to be, more anxious, if we are virtuous, to do them good, and in any case to make them do us good. We do not like to think of anyone lazily enjoying life, however refined may be the quality of his enjoyment. We feel that everybody ought to be doing something to help on the great cause (whatever it may be), the more so as so many bad men are working against it and ought to be stopped. We have not leisure of mind, therefore, to acquire any knowledge except such as will help us in the fight for whatever it may happen to be that we think important.

There is much to be said for the narrowly utilitarian view of education. There is not time to learn everything before beginning to make a living, and undoubtedly "useful" knowledge is *very* useful. It has made the modern world. Without it, we should not have machines or motor-cars or railways or aeroplanes, it should be added that we should not have modern advertising or modern propaganda. Modern knowledge has brought about an immense improvement in average health, and at the same time has discovered how to exterminate large cities by poison gas. Whatever is distinctive of our world, as compared with former times, has its source in "useful" knowledge. No community as yet has enough of it, and undoubtedly education must continue to promote it.

It must also be admitted that a great deal of the traditional cultural education was foolish. Boys spent many years acquiring Latin and Greek grammar, without being, at the end, either capable or desirous (except in a small percentage of cases) of reading a Greek or Latin author. Modern languages and history are preferable, from every point of view, to Latin and Greek. They are not only more useful, but they give much more culture in much less time. For an Italian of the fifteenth century, since practically everything worth reading, if not in his own language, was in Greek or Latin, these languages were the indispensable keys to culture. But since that time great literatures have grown up in various modern languages, and the development of civilization has been so rapid that knowledge of antiquity has become much less useful in understanding our problems than



knowledge of modern nations and their comparatively recent history. The traditional schoolmaster's point of view, which was admirable at the time of the revival of learning, became gradually unduly narrow, since it ignored what the world has done since the fifteenth century. And not only history and modern languages, but science also, when properly taught, contributes to culture. It is therefore possible to maintain that education should have other aims than direct utility, without defending the traditional curriculum. Utility and culture, when both are conceived broadly, are found to be less incompatible than they appear to the fanatical advocates of either.

Apart, however, from the cases in which culture and direct utility can be combined, there is indirect utility, of various different kinds, in the possession of knowledge which does not contribute to technical efficiency. I think some of the worst features of the modern world could be improved by a greater encouragement of such knowledge and a less ruthless pursuit of mere professional competence.

When conscious activity is wholly concentrated on some one definite purpose, the ultimate result, for most people, is lack of balance accompanied by some form of nervous disorder. The men who directed German policy during the war made mistakes, for example, as regards the submarine campaign which brought America on to the side of the Allies, which any person coming fresh to the subject could have seen to be unwise, but which they could not judge sanely owing to mental concentration and lack of holidays. The same sort of thing may be seen wherever bodies of men attempt tasks which put a prolonged strain upon spontaneous impulses. Japanese imperialists, Russian Communists, and German Nazis all have a kind of tense fanaticism which comes of living too exclusively in the mental world of certain tasks to be accomplished. When the tasks are as important and as feasible as the fanatics suppose, the result may be magnificent, but in most cases narrowness of outlook has caused oblivion of some powerful counteracting force, or has made all such forces seem the work of the devil, to be met by punishment and terror. Men as well as children have need of play, that is to say, of periods of activity having no purpose beyond present enjoyment. But if play is to serve its purpose, it must be possible to find pleasure and interest in matters not connected with work.

The amusements of modern urban populations tend more and more to be passive and collective, and to consist of inactive observation of the skilled activities of others. Undoubtedly such amusements are much better than none, but they are not as good as would be those of a population which had, through education, a wider range of intelligent interests not connected with work. Better economic organization, allowing mankind to benefit by the productivity of machines, should lead to a very great increase of leisure, and much leisure is

apt to be tedious except to those who have considerable intelligent activities and interests. If a leisured population is to be happy, it must be an educated population, and must be educated with a view to mental enjoyment as well as to the direct usefulness of technical knowledge.

The cultural element in the acquisition of knowledge, when it is successfully assimilated, forms the character of a man's thoughts and desires, making them concern themselves, in part at least, with large impersonal objects, not only with matters of immediate importance to himself. It has been too readily assumed that, when a man has acquired certain capacities by means of knowledge, he will use them in ways that are socially beneficial. The narrowly utilitarian conception of education ignores the necessity of training a man's purposes as well as his skill. There is in untrained human nature a very considerable element of cruelty, which shows itself in many ways, great and small. Boys at school tend to be unkind to a new boy, or to one whose clothes are not quite conventional. Many women (and not a few men) inflict as much pain as they can by means of malicious gossip. The Spaniards enjoy bull-fights; the British enjoy hunting and shooting. The same cruel impulses take more serious forms in the hunting of Jews in Germany and kulaks in Russia. All imperialism affords scope for them, and in war they become sanctified as the highest form of public duty.

Now while it must be admitted that highly educated people are sometimes cruel, I think there can be no doubt that they are less often so than people whose minds have lain fallow. The bully in a school is seldom a boy whose proficiency in learning is up to the average. When a lynching takes place, the ringleaders are almost invariably very ignorant men. This is not because mental cultivation produces positive humanitarian feelings, though it may do so; it is rather because it gives other interests than the ill-treatment of neighbours, and other sources of self-respect than the assertion of domination. The two things most universally desired are power and admiration. Ignorant men can, as a rule, only achieve either by brutal means, involving the acquisition of physical mastery. Culture gives a man less harmful forms of power and more deserving ways of making himself admired. Galileo did more than any monarch has done to change the world, and his power immeasurably exceeded that of his persecutors. He had therefore no need to aim at becoming a persecutor in his turn.

Perhaps the most important advantage of "useless" knowledge is that it promotes a contemplative habit of mind. There is in the world much too much readiness, not only for action without adequate previous reflection, but also for some sort of action on occasions on which wisdom would counsel inaction. People show their bias on

thus matter in various curious ways. Mephistopheles tells the young student that theory is grey but the tree of life is green, and everyone quotes this as if it were Goethe's opinion, instead of what he supposes the devil would be likely to say to an undergraduate. Hamlet is held up as an awful warning against thought without action, but no one holds up Othello as a warning against action without thought. Professors such as Bergson, from a kind of snobbery towards the practical man, decry philosophy, and say that life at its best should resemble a cavalry charge. For my part, I think action is best when it emerges from a profound apprehension of the universe and human destiny, not from some wildly passionate impulse of romantic but disproportioned self-assertion. A habit of finding pleasure in thought rather than in action is a safeguard against unwisdom and excessive love of power, a means of preserving serenity in misfortune and peace of mind among worries. A life confined to what is personal is likely, sooner or later, to become unbearably painful, it is only by windows into a larger and less fretful cosmos that the more tragic parts of life become endurable.

A contemplative habit of mind has advantages ranging from the most trivial to the most profound. To begin with minor vexations, such as fleas, missing trains, or cantankerous business associates. Such troubles seem hardly worthy to be met by reflections on the excellence of heroism or the transitoriness of all human ills, and yet the irritation to which they give rise destroys many people's good temper and enjoyment of life. On such occasions, there is much consolation to be found in out-of-the-way bits of knowledge which have some real or fancied connection with the trouble of the moment; or even if they have none, they serve to obliterate the present from one's thoughts. When assailed by people who are white with fury, it is pleasant to remember the chapter in Descartes' *Treatise on the Passions* entitled "Why those who grow pale with rage are more to be feared than those who grow red." When one feels impatient over the difficulty of securing international co-operation, one's impatience is diminished if one happens to think of the sainted King Louis IX, before embarking on his crusade, allying himself with the Old Man of the Mountain, who appears in the *Arabian Nights* as the dark source of half the wickedness in the world. When the rapacity of capitalists grows oppressive, one may be suddenly consoled by the recollection that Brutus, that exemplar of republican virtue, lent money to a city at 40 per cent, and hired a private army to besiege it when it failed to pay the interest.

Curious learning not only makes unpleasant things less unpleasant, but also makes pleasant things more pleasant. I have enjoyed peaches and apricots more since I have known that they were first cultivated in China in the early days of the Han dynasty; that Chinese hostages held by the great King Kaniska introduced them into India, whence

they spread to Persia, reaching the Roman Empire in the first century of our era; that the word "apricot" is derived from the same Latin source as the word "precocious," because the apricot ripens early; and that the A at the beginning was added by mistake, owing to a false etymology. All this makes the fruit taste much sweeter

About a hundred years ago, a number of well-meaning philanthropists started societies "for the diffusion of useful knowledge," with the result that people have ceased to appreciate the delicious savour of "useless" knowledge. Opening Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* at haphazard on a day when I was threatened by that mood, I learnt that there is a "melancholy matter," but that, while some think it may be engendered of all four humours, "Galen holds that it may be engendered of three alone, excluding phlegm or pituita, whose true assertion Valerius and Menardus stiffly maintain, and so doth Fuscus, Montaltus, Montanus. How (say they) can white become black?" In spite of this unanswerable argument, Hercules de Saxonia and Cardan, Guianerius and Laurentius, are (so Burton tells us) of the opposite opinion. Soothed by these historical reflections, my melancholy, whether due to three humours or to four, was dissipated. As a cure for too much zeal, I can imagine few measures more effective than a course of such ancient controversies.

But while the trivial pleasures of culture have their place as a relief from the trivial worries of practical life, the more important merits of contemplation are in relation to the greater evils of life, death and pain and cruelty, and the blind march of nations into unnecessary disaster. For those to whom dogmatic religion can no longer bring comfort, there is need of some substitute, if life is not to become dusty and harsh and filled with trivial self-assertion. The world at present is full of angry self-centred groups, each incapable of viewing human life as a whole, each willing to destroy civilization rather than yield an inch. To this narrowness no amount of technical instruction will provide an antidote. The antidote, in so far as it is matter of individual psychology, is to be found in history, biology, astronomy, and all those studies which, without destroying self-respect, enable the individual to see himself in his proper perspective. What is needed is not this or that specific piece of information, but such knowledge as inspires a conception of the ends of human life as a whole: art and history, acquaintance with the lives of heroic individuals, and some understanding of the strangely accidental and ephemeral position of man in the cosmos—all this touched with an emotion of pride in what is distinctively human, the power to see and to know, to feel magnanimously and to think with understanding. It is from large perceptions combined with impersonal emotion that wisdom most readily springs.

Life, at all times full of pain, is more painful in our time than

in the two centuries that preceded it. The attempt to escape from pain drives men to triviality, to self-deception, to the invention of vast collective myths. But these momentary alleviations do but increase the sources of suffering in the long run. Both private and public misfortune can only be mastered by a process in which will and intelligence interact. the part of will is to refuse to shirk the evil or accept an unreal solution, while the part of intelligence is to understand it, to find a cure if it is curable, and, if not, to make it bearable by seeing it in its relations, accepting it as unavoidable, and remembering what lies outside it in other regions, other ages, and the abysses of interstellar space.



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*PART VI*

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***EXPERIENCE AND THE  
FICTIVE WORLD:  
THE AUTHOR AND HISTORY***

From the time of Plato, men have recognized the convenience of separating history and poetry (or imaginative literature). But in our own day, students of language and culture have come to question the hard and fast distinctions between the two classes of language. Haphazard elements play upon the historian's description of past events; he may even have taken part in decisions which he later purports to describe "objectively." Further, history as an artifact is based on human decisions vis-à-vis acquired data: a piece of knee-bone, a partial inscription on a tomb, a parish record, a

soldier's diary, a newspaper account. But the belief that history as we know it is somehow true in the sense that our description of it can never change is at best questionable. Its basis is an act of faith, and a very slim understanding of the history of history. Reason and fact suggest that we do alter our descriptions of the past. Indeed, in recent months we have been told that **homo sapiens** existed in something like his present form over 2½ million years ago. Man is not, as students of my generation were told, only a million years old. Our knowledge of the past is always changing.

More important, history and fiction are not easy to separate, even in particular cases, when men have the time and patience to attempt the separation of fact from fantasy. In "The Jet-propelled Couch," we have a case history set down by a medical doctor, a psychoanalyst. Robert Lindner tells the story of his patient, a brilliant scientist with a fascinating case of schizophrenia; the case study will lure most readers on with all the suspense of a good detective story. The reader soon learns that the patient is an artist, in the sense that he "creates" an entire cosmos, a world populated by strange peoples, languages, mountains, seas. Moreover, relations to parts of the physical universe as we know it also exist in detail in his monumental imaginative work. Kirk "believes" that this cosmos exists. But Dr. Lindner's point is a sobering one. A too facile acceptance of one's own distance from the fantasy world (any bet on the soundness of one's mental health) involves risk. This case history is about two men—both susceptible, though not in equal measure, to the same fantasy. As the doctor and patient exchange roles, we mark the tenuous boundaries between history and fantasy.

Kirk, the patient in Lindner's case history, makes the mistake of thinking of the stories he has read or written as "true." Beyond that, he comes to think of his memory as perfect; his fantasy and his "biography" begin to merge. The psychoanalyst has the difficult job of distinguishing between Kirk's imagination and his recall. From a functional point of view, Kirk's history has been lost. What takes its place is 12,000 or so pages of manuscript, which Lindner calls "the amended 'biography' of Kirk Allen." Accordingly, "This was divided into some 200 chapters and read like fiction." Another 2,000 pages of notes. In all, maps, charts, architectural sketches, genealogical tables, star maps, descriptions of the culture and economies of nonexistent peoples—their religion, ecology, nematology, mechanics and the like—all the product of a fertile imagination.

The case is more than paradigmatic. We too casually accept the various information media as somehow operating under the criterion of truth, if not of justice. In the story, "Cyclists' Raid," for example, a small California town is taken over by the paramilitary movement of an outlaw motorcycle gang. The town in



the story is near San Francisco, as is Hollister, which was raided by a band of motorcyclists on July 6, 1947. There are sixty motorcyclists in Rooney's story; **The San Francisco Chronicle** reported 4,000 members of the American Motorcycle Association as having terrorized Hollister. More than the sixty in Rooney's story were put in jail. Is the point, then, that authors base their stories on fact? Or is the point after all, that history and fiction do not correspond?

Perhaps these are interesting questions, but what kind of answers do we expect? Shall we suppose, for example, that the count recorded in the newspaper was accurate to the integer? Did exactly 4,000 motorcyclists—not one more, not one less—raid Hollister? Perhaps someone will argue that the figure is accurate enough to suggest the unpleasantness of the event (which no one need doubt). But in preparing evidence for his "history," the historian draws on such data as newspaper accounts, which in themselves may only be approximations of actual events. How, then, does it help us to proclaim that history is true, and eternally separated from the world of fiction? And if we add, either explicitly or implicitly, that fiction is somehow subversive of the standards of truth, not only do we fail to offer a useful distinction, we hinder the understanding of language. I press this point because, whereas historical statements purport to be true (even when they are false), writers like Frank Rooney make no such "truth claim." Rooney does not even assert the historical existence of Joel Bleeker, nor of any other character in his story.

The details of his story are the result of Rooney's choices among the possibilities open to him. And these details are observable and describable. Rooney could have had as many or as few motorcyclists drive into town as he wished. What is important in evaluating a story is the appropriateness of any given choice. Does the fact that there are sixty cyclists function effectively in the story? If so, why? If not, why not?

Of course, the writer "uses his own experiences" in creating literature. Whose should he use? But the writer is not bound by any criterion of truth value outside his work. Comparison between F. Scott Fitzgerald's "Crazy Sunday" and Dwight Taylor's "Scott Fitzgerald in Hollywood" is revealing in this connection. The names change, the setting changes slightly, but in general the situation remains the same. Fitzgerald describes an afternoon at a Hollywood party; he attended such a party, and partly out of this material he fashioned his story. But as Dwight Taylor shows (and we may conveniently take his essay as a historical paradigm), Fitzgerald, in manipulating the details of his story, took considerable liberties with the facts. Events are turned about to suit Fitzgerald.

Similarly, during the cyclists' raid on Hollister, no one died as a result of injuries. Yet Rooney makes the death of Bleeker's daughter an important event. Why? In manipulating history, does

literature become abstract? Is the number 60 intrinsically more abstract than the number 4,000? Is the blood that flows from the wounded body of Joel Bleeker's daughter an abstraction? Are the goggles worn by the mob abstract? How do we determine whether or not they truly cover the motorcyclists' eyes? Rooney's aim of course, is to show what it might be like in a world where events such as those he presents actually occurred.

The fiction writer cannot operate successfully without concrete details. The argument that literature is too abstract is a hard one to understand. The details of Rooney's story can be described in much the same way as we describe a goldfish, a house, or the procedures in a laboratory experiment. The choices in the story are the "objects," the particulars on which we must keep our eye.

A final example may indicate the flexibility of the boundary between exposition and fiction. The first chapter of Jonathan Kozol's fine novel, **The Fume of Poppies**, is made up of two parts: first, a catalog description of a course in Classical literature at Harvard; second, marginalia and notes taken by a student during the class sessions of that course. Now, a check of past catalogs will show that the course description is much like others, perhaps even like those in the catalog of the reader's college. Suppose such a check revealed that this is a verbatim representation of the course description in a Harvard catalog. Would this mean that the course description is true? If so, true to what? Why does Kozol **use** a course description?

This is not an empty question, for aren't course descriptions intrinsically dull? (Write a paper on "interesting.") I think the answer must be, not necessarily. The question is under what conditions, and for what purpose, and with what effectiveness, is the course description used. If the course description for English 1A were read as an occasion for girl-watching, **someone** might find it interesting, even amusing. Yes, and the remarks of a professor (even on a bad day), if filtered through the mind of an interesting character, might also hold attention, and even amuse. Even the student's lecture notebook is **potentially** interesting.

As we move toward the fictive forms, we ought not to feel like ones cast adrift in strange waters. The method of careful observation applies as well to the sections following as to those already finished. Indeed, the linguist and the anthropologist have cast doubt on the assumption that we can absolutely distinguish between the world of fiction and the myth of reality. Perhaps we do no service to knowledge, or to ourselves, by too stern an imposition of truth value on written material of any kind. For new evidence may alter our awareness of history; and if I look again with greater care at a short story, I may note a correspondence or relevance between a fictive situation and values of importance other than truth.

For the most part, victors record the histories of wars. The past as we know it is something like the history of Kirk's planet X. The fact of military victory cannot assure us that all elements of self-deception are eliminated from what emerges as the "authoritative" point of view. In any case, we must be able to state the gain of our distinction between history and fiction. As it happened, Kirk's rediscovery of his personal history brought with it the gain of his productive return to a society which had ceased to find him of use. On the other hand, unthinking acceptance of a particular truth claim may blot out the importance of new and useful evidence. There is always the danger of history becoming myth.

Fiction begins and ends with myth and fantasy. If we look back at preceding sections, we can see that elements of fantasy, or "subjectivity," entered other modes of discourse. There would be no need to persuade anyone, no need to be careful in selecting a tone and style, if in the examples we present the "truth" were readily manifest. Even in science, today's best theory is tomorrow's document in the history of science. No student needs to be intimidated by such notions as "fiction" and "non-fiction." If the terms help, help in discriminating segments of language, they may be worth retaining in one's critical vocabulary. But if the distinctions begin to become crutches, we have already begged the main question of whether or not a firm boundary between the two sets can effectively be established. Description has become dogma.



# THE JET-PROPELLED COUCH

ROBERT LINDNER



"No sound was there in that high presence chamber in Galing till in a minute's space the serving man returned with startled countenance, and, bowing before Lord Juss, said, 'Lord, it is an Ambassador from Witchland and his train. He craveth present audience' "

—E. R. Eddison, *The Worm Ouroboros*.

The chair behind the couch is not the stationary object it seems. I have traveled all over the world on it, and back and forth in time. Without moving from my easy seat I have met important personages and witnessed great events. But it remained for Kirk Allen to take me out of this world when he transformed the couch in my consulting room into a space ship that roved the galaxies.

My tale begins on a sultry June morning in Baltimore with a telephone call from a physician at a government installation in the Southwest. He said he was calling about a patient who had been sent to him and whom he, in turn, wished to refer to me. I asked him for details.

"The fellow I'm calling you about," he said, "is a man in his thirties, a research physicist with us out here. As far as I can tell, he's perfectly normal in every way except for a lot of crazy ideas

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about living part of the time in another world—on another planet. Maybe this isn't so bad, but the trouble is he's really 'gone' so much—if you know what I mean—that his efficiency is way below par and the operation here is suffering because of it. As I say, he's a physicist. Washington sent him out to do a key job, and until a few weeks ago he was going great guns. But lately he's out of contact with the work so much and for so long that something's got to be done about it."

"How did you find out about his ideas?" I asked. "Did he complain to you—or what?"

"No," the doctor replied, "Allen—the patient's name is Kirk Allen—never said a thing about it. To him it's all perfectly natural. Of course, he's sorry about the drop in departmental efficiency. Apologizes all over the place and promises to do better. Says—get this!—says he'll *try to spend more time on this planet!*"

"And how did he get to you?" I persisted.

"Well, Allen's a section chief and the biggest part of his job is to evaluate and correlate reports of the research people under him and then send on digests of his section's work to the divisional head. His digests kept coming in later and later, and when they did get to the division head, Bagby—that's the division chief—not only noticed they were below standard for Allen, but some of them were incoherent and a few of the papers were covered with funny symbols or . . . pictographs, I guess you'd call them . . ."

"—So Bagby called him in," I urged.

"Yes. He called him in and asked for an explanation."

"And what did Allen say?"

"Well, he really didn't say much of anything the first time. Just that he'd been away a lot lately and that he'd try to spend more time here from now on."

"Had he been away?" I asked.

"No. You see, it's really as hard to get out of here as to come in. Allen couldn't leave without all sorts of security red tape and Bagby knew he hadn't been off the premises for months and months. But then Bagby thought maybe Allen meant he'd been ill in his quarters or something. Well, Bagby checked, but the records showed that Allen hadn't missed a day. Then he called in some of the people Allen works with and got them to talk about him."

"Did he learn anything?" I asked.

"Nothing much, except that a few of the ones Bagby talked to said they'd noticed Allen seemed vague and distracted lately."

The doctor paused.

"Just lighting my pipe," he apologized. "Well, the whole thing hung fire for a few days—until the next batch of reports came in late

again and covered over with the same kind of . . . doodling. So Bagby had another session with Allen."

"What happened this time?" I pressed.

"Well, the outcome of it was that Bagby sent Allen over to me. Seems that all he could get out of the boy was a lot of regretful apologies. Then Allen made this crazy statement about spending more time on this planet. He told Bagby it might be hard to arrange, but he'd do it somehow. Bagby tried to pressure him on this but couldn't get anywhere. It was all very vague, crazy talk. Bagby told me he thought the boy was pulling his leg at first, but when Allen persisted in what he said, Bagby realized the fellow must be off his rocker."

"Did Bagby ask about the doodling on the reports?"

"Oh yes," the doctor said. "Seems all Allen had to say was that those symbols were notes he intended to transcribe into his diaries. Said he never got around to it and wanted Bagby to give the reports back so he could catch up with his back entries!"

"You said Bagby sent Allen to you."

"Yes. Matter of fact, he's in my waiting room right now."

"What have you decided?"

"Only that I can't handle this," he replied. "I'm just an ordinary medical man. When it comes to stuff like this—psychiatric stuff—all I know is that I shouldn't fool with it. That's why I'm calling you."

"I couldn't possibly come out there. . . ."

The doctor chuckled. "We wouldn't have you if you could. . . . I'm sure you understand. . . . No; if you'll agree to take the fellow as a patient we'll get him to you in Baltimore. Incidentally, we'll be responsible for his fees."

"Why don't you use regular government facilities?"

"Because none are available to us," the doctor replied. "You see, Allen is with us under contract. We're required to provide medical services for him, but we're not set up here for his kind of case—I guess it just didn't occur to anyone that scientists might blow their tops like other people. So in a case like this I'm obliged to use my discretion and make the best disposition I can."

I hesitated. The doctor's voice recalled me from my speculations. "What d'you say?"

"I'm thinking it over," I said. "Tell me, is it your impression that Allen requires hospitalization?"

"Oh, no," he replied quickly. "I'd say this what-ever-it-is—fantasy, I guess you'd call it—is a perfectly innocuous business. I mean, Allen appears to be completely unaffected by it most of the time."

"But from what you say he's involved in it more and more," I pointed out.

"That's why I think something should be done right now. Maybe if we get him under treatment at once we can block it here."

"That's possible," I agreed.

"I really can't explain how it works exactly," the doctor continued, "but I have the impression his psychosis—I suppose that's what it is—doesn't interfere with his ability to take care of himself or get around in a normal fashion. At least not at this point. I'd say from what he's told me that he has a certain control over it—can get in and out of it when he wants to, I mean. And he's really one of the mildest, nicest chaps ever. I can assure you he'll be no custodial problem."

"I'm glad of that," I said.

"Then you'll take him?" the doctor asked eagerly.

"I can't say for sure," I answered, "but I'll be glad to see him and let you know."

"That's good enough for me," he said.

Kirk Allen arrived in Baltimore three days after my talk with the doctor. Any speculations I had had about him as a "mad scientist" evaporated when I saw him in my office. A vigorous-looking man of average height, clear-eyed and blond, his seersucker unwrinkled despite the long trip and the humidity, his panama encircled with a gay band, he looked like a junior executive. His manner, as he introduced himself and we made some initial small talk about the weather and his flight east, was charming. He spoke with just enough diffidence to let me know that the situation he now found himself in was slightly embarrassing. His pleasant, well-modulated baritone voice intrigued me from the first. Although his speech was unmistakably American, it had a vaguely foreign, musical lilt. This observation I chose as the point of entrance for my clinical examination of him.

"You were not born in the United States, were you, Mr. Allen?" I said.

"No," he answered, "but how did you know?"

"Your voice, the way you talk. There's something about it . . . I would suspect you spoke a softer language at one time. What was it?"

"You're right," he said. "My first language was a Polynesian dialect, but I thought it was pretty well hidden. Does it annoy you?"

"Not at all," I said. "As a matter of fact, I find it quite pleasant. Tell me, how did it happen?"

"My father," he answered, "was a naval officer. I was born in Hawaii, where he was stationed when the First World War broke out. My nurse until I was six years old was a Polynesian woman, and it was her dialect I learned to speak as a small child. Later my father was Commissioner on one of the mandated islands, and we remained



there until his death, when I was fourteen. All that time I spoke English with no one except governesses who came out from the States to take care of me, and my parents, whom I hardly saw. My playmates, of course, were all native children and . . . ”

Kirk Allen was the only child of his parents' marriage. His father, already an old man when Kirk was born, had been married previously and was even then a grandfather. Kirk recalled him as a man of imposing presence. A commander of fighting vessels under sail, and later of coal-burning men-of-war, he seemed always to have a deck beneath his feet. He was proud, taciturn, stern, and kept his more tender emotions rigorously in check. From those about him he exacted absolute, immediate obedience, for which the only reward was a gruff monosyllabic acknowledgment or, in Kirk's case, a tousling of the boy's hair with his heavy hand. To cross this old man was dangerous. The walking stick he carried was never out of his grasp, there was no one on the island, except his wife and the transient white governesses, who did not at some time feel its weight. And yet, Kirk said, something about his father was warm and kind, something indefinable was softer. That quality was remembered in later years chiefly through the boy's sense of smell; a blend of tobacco, whisky, leather and salt air would evoke, for Kirk, a poignant picture of the aging gentleman who was seldom seen out of naval uniform, who conducted his home and "his island" like the wardroom of a battleship.

Why his mother had married the Commodore—as Kirk's father was called—was a mystery. She was at least thirty-five years younger than he and temperamentally his opposite. Her father had been a wealthy diplomat who had served his country in most of the European capitals and died under tragic, somewhat scandalous, circumstances in Italy. She had been educated in France at a convent that specialized in the care of girls from similar backgrounds, but her high spirits and audacity had led her into many amusing and—for those times—daring escapades. When her father died, her mother, who could not tolerate the revelations following his death, retired to Honolulu, where she felt more secure from gossip. Kirk's mother, then eighteen, went with her. The two women lived quietly there. The girl was under constant supervision, her innate gaiety severely suppressed and her social nature restrained. For about five years she devoted herself exclusively to her mother. Then, at a diplomatic function, she met the elderly widower. After a brief courtship she married him, perhaps, Kirk thought, as a desperate means of escaping her mother.

Immediately after marriage Mrs. Allen recovered her natural ebullience. The Commodore was indulgent with his beautiful young wife, proud of her in a fatherly fashion, and rejuvenated by her zestfulness. Their home rapidly became Honolulu's social center and

remained so throughout the war years, although the Commodore was not often present to play his accustomed role of benign observer.

Kirk was born in 1918. Immediately after his birth the family went to Paris, where his father was assigned for duty at the peace negotiations. The Allens remained there about a year, and then the Commodore was reassigned to Hawaii. Shortly after their return to the Pacific area the old man was appointed Commissioner over a mandated island. There was, Kirk later heard, some question about accepting this assignment and much debate over whether his mother and he should accompany the Commodore. His parents were reluctant to exchange the comfortable life of Honolulu, where they were the undisputed leaders of society, for the rigors of existence on a remote outpost. They agreed, however, to accept the appointment for one year in order not to prejudice a long record of excellent government service. After this demonstration of loyalty, they felt they could reasonably request assignment back to Hawaii or Stateside. However, life did not work out according to their plans.

The first year of their stay on the island passed rapidly. Both the Commodore and his wife were busy, he with administrative duties and she with welfare projects for the natives. When the year ended the Commodore put in for replacement as planned. His still very young wife joyously anticipated the return to more civilized society and lived only for the day when a new Commissioner would take over. But none came, and the days of anxious expectation stretched into weeks. Finally, the Commodore was informed that his application for replacement had been denied.

At the collapse of her hopes, Kirk's mother reverted to her pre-marital apathy: she lost her sparkle, became lethargic and melancholy, and went into a decline of spirits from which she did not recover for ten years and more. For a time she spent her energies in quarreling with her husband over their future, vainly urging him to resign. His concept of duty, however, was rigid, and although he indulged her in everything else, this he refused to do. Nor would she listen to his suggestion that she and her child return to Hawaii. Obviously needful of his paternal protection, and fearful to face the world without it, she chose to resign herself resentfully. She abandoned the projects she had begun with such enthusiasm only the previous year and withdrew from all social intercourse. Whereas she had formerly taken at least a supervisory interest in Kirk, she now left him completely in the charge of his Hawaiian nurse, native servants, or the governesses who came and went as the years passed. Her relations with the Commodore became merely formal: she would emerge from her room only at dinner time and retire as soon as the meal ended. What she did during the long days, Kirk never knew. She became a shadowy, mysterious figure in his life—someone unknown and apart.

The only other significant, hence formative, human relationships Kirk had during childhood and early adolescence were with his Hawaiian nurse, the native women who took charge of him after her death, and the few white women whom his father employed from the States

Myna, the Hawaiian nurse, was the first and most important influence on Kirk's development. She had come to the family as a wet-nurse for the infant and remained to mother him until the end of his sixth year. Kirk's recollection of her as a person is unclear, but the feelings evoked by her memory are sweet and strong. She was a dark-skinned, buxom young Polynesian matron who came down from the hill country to seek employment in Honolulu just at the time Kirk was born. She could speak only a few words of English but was bright and intelligent and took over the mothering of the infant the moment she saw him. He was left in her complete care and loved her with an absoluteness which she returned. Not only was he nourished from her huge bosom, but from her vast placidity and comforting presence he obtained everything his real mother denied. He slept with her, ate with her, played with her. During the day she was hardly separated from him for a moment, and at night her warm nakedness engulfed him. In every way Myna treated Kirk as her child and reared him according to her own tradition. His first language was hers, and his early habits were determined by her native culture. Because his mother was busy, during that time, becoming the island's social queen, Myna had her own way with Kirk. Indeed, only when a trivial incident suddenly recalled the boy's presence to his parents did they bother to interfere with her charge. One day a visitor expressed surprise that Kirk prattled only in the dialect he had been taught by his nurse and vigorously ventured an opinion that the child was old enough to begin learning a "white" language. That brought the situation to the attention of Kirk's mother, and for a few months Myna was given other duties. As a result, Kirk learned the rudiments of English and was slowly—but only slightly—transformed from a "little savage" into a passable facsimile of a "civilized" child. When Kirk recalled that period of re-education, he remembered it as a painful experience.

"Maybe it wasn't that way," he said, "but I think of it only in terms of constraint—if you can understand what I mean. The world seemed to close in on me somehow, to box me in. The worst part was shoes and clothing. I think I was used to being free—physically, I mean. Then everything became—well—tight . . . A matter of buttons and laces, things to put on and take off. And I had to worry then—about keeping clean and such things." But his mother could not maintain enthusiasm very long for the new regime, and she rapidly tired of her accustomed role. Gradually, Myna recovered her place.

After that, however, the nurse kept a weather eye on the amenities of speech, clothing, manners and habits of her charge, and was careful to insure that Kirk—when his parents were about, at least—appeared to be a child of their culture rather than hers.

Participation in this conspiracy only deepened the love between Kirk and his nurse. By the time the family went to the island which was to be their home for many years, the bond between these two was absolute and enduring. On the island, Kirk was entrusted to Myna. Except for a few hours each day when the boy attended a school organized by his mother for the native children and taught by the wife of an Army officer, he never left Myna's side. She died suddenly when he was six years old, and the space in his life left by her death was never filled.

There were no other white children on the island. The Americans who came and went through the years were childless, so until he was fourteen Kirk did not see another boy or girl like himself. While outwardly this curious condition seemed to have no significance, it led to internal perplexity, fashioning a psychic predisposition that did not reveal its consequences until, decades later, his mental estrangement became obvious. Throughout childhood and early adolescence he was haunted by the difference between himself and his companions, a difference not solely of skin color but of social heritage and the innumerable subtleties of life. While he could communicate with his playmates more directly and more fully than he could with white adults even of his own family, he was still set apart from them and different. There was always something, some invisible screen, between him and them, some barrier he could not bridge. And this produced a split in his personality that generated two contradictory views of self and world. On one side, a lowering of self-esteem developed—a feeling of inferiority and a sense of having been rejected for good cause. The native world, with its warmth and communal cohesiveness, opened to him only in part, admitted him only halfway. While he longed to share in it totally, he could not, and he naturally attributed this to some defect in himself, some profound but undiscoverable fault.

On the other side Kirk developed an internal sense of superiority. Because of the deference accorded him as a white boy, the son of the Commissioner, and because he was not permitted to take the final step toward total community with his native associates, a conviction of difference and special election was born in him. A private sense of distance between himself and all other inhabitants of the world grew. He *was* different and better, he told himself; more, he was therefore entitled to special treatment.

Between six and nine Kirk was cared for by a succession of native women. These women, he remembers, were cut from the same

pattern as his lost Myna, but with none was he as close. Unlike her, they had other preoccupations, often children of their own, and they cared for him dutifully rather than from love.

At nine began the parade of governesses. Like the native women, they tend to merge in Kirk's memory. Only two were important one because she increased the boy's sense of isolation; the other because she introduced him to sex.

The governesses were brought out to educate Kirk. There were four or five of them: each remained the better part of a year, all but one left because of boredom. Life on the remote island, so romantic in prospect, in actuality proved disappointing. Since none happened to be an unusual person who could find entertainment or interest in that oneness with Nature which the natives made into an art of life, the experience was dull and devastating. The job of educating Kirk was the single responsibility of each governess. nevertheless, it was onerous. He had an overwhelming curiosity and, even then, an insatiable intellectual appetite. By nine, despite a slow start and casual teaching, he was far advanced in ability to read and comprehend. Forced in upon himself and constrained to seek substitutes for significant interpersonal relationships and experiences, he found in reading his only way of apprehending the world. Carefully, painfully, but later with amazing ease, he ploughed his way through everything readable on the island. The sorry textbooks used in the school, the religious tracts sent by missions, the volumes in the library of a resident Catholic priest, the paperbacks discarded by sailors from vessels that put in for various reasons, the novels brought out by wives of transient island personnel, his father's naval, engineering, navigational and gunnery manuals—all of these were devoured by Kirk, not once but many times over as the years of isolation mounted. Merely to keep up with his spongelike mind demanded more of the governesses than they were prepared to give. The best they could do—and in some areas they did that well—was to organize and discipline what he already knew.

I have said that only two of these women made any real impression on Kirk. One was his first governess, a middle-aged widow from a Far Western state, whose passion for cleanliness was pathological and whose hatred and mistrust of the natives amounted to hysteria. From the moment she arrived until the day she left Kirk's life was a hell of prohibitions and negative commands. This miserable person tried to foist on the boy her compulsions, her fears, her prejudices. She insisted on physical cleanliness to a degree beyond reason. At least twice each day he was scrubbed with scalding water; the slightest spot on his shirt was made the occasion for a complete change of clothing. She imbued Kirk with such dread of contamination from his familiar, innocuous surroundings that he literally threaded his way

through the world like a cat on a sideboard. Because this pasteurized virago considered the native children "filthy niggers," Kirk was forbidden even to converse with his friends and disbarred from any fellowship except hers. After she went, he was again free to consort with the children, but he could never recover his former sense of easy naturalness with them.

While this woman—"Sterile Sally," Kirk called her during his analysis—did not remain long on the island, she affected the boy profoundly. Because of her, he was pushed more deeply inside himself. As a consequence of this added isolation, his fantasy life—until then of a fashion and degree usual among lonely children—increased sharply. Daydreaming now came to occupy much of his time, and there appeared those lavish, imaginative reconstructions of the world which were to be so significant for him and so characteristic of his life up to the day we met.

The details of the initial fantasy that Kirk toyed with during Sterile Sally's residence and for some while thereafter need not concern us here. It was a childish hodgepodge, constructed from odd remnants of reading. He identified himself with characters from the Oz books, for example, and mentally played out a cordial existence in a friendlier, more exciting world. This primary experience unfolded the imaginative facility and the technique of mental detachment which he developed to astonishing proportions in adulthood.

At eleven a new governess entered Kirk's life, and opened for him another category of experience. She was a young woman whom Kirk recalls as quite attractive, who remained only long enough to introduce the boy to sex—and run off with the schoolteacher's husband. Here is Kirk's story of his sexual seduction.

"You must remember that life on the island was very different from life as you know it. Kids mature more rapidly there and sex is treated in another way. Sex play, for example, is not only open but encouraged by adults of the native community. The natural curiosity of kids is unchecked and the exploration of each other's bodies—which here children do in secret—is conducted openly. Matter of fact, the adults, if they attend to it at all, do so with amusement. Later, of course, the whole thing is surrounded with odd taboos because of their involved kinship regulations, but none of these apply before a certain age. Things like masturbation are carried on in public. The loin cloth or breech clout is the only article of clothing worn by men, while the women wear only a skirt or, if they work around whites, a loose dress. Practically the first thing anyone does when he enters his own hut is to discard whatever he's been wearing and go about naked. Until ceremonial initiation for boys and marriage for girls, children ordinarily wear nothing except when they go to

school or church I imagine things are different now, but when I lived there that's the way it was.

"Anyhow, this much was true and probably still is: kids know all about sex from the beginning, and except for the few taboos about who can do what with whom after initiation there's almost absolute freedom. Parents copulate in front of their children, lovers conduct their affairs in the bush where kids occasionally run across them and think nothing of it, and so on

"Like any other child, I knew what there was to know about sex and it never bothered me in any way. Although adults showed a certain restraint when I was around, in this area the kids accepted me wholly and I participated in their sex play. There was no difference between me and my playmates except that I was a shade lighter than the lightest of them and my hair was softer and blondish and I usually wore shorts.

"When Miss Lilian arrived—that was her name I now remember—I was, at least by her standards, a sexual sophisticate, although I hadn't actually had intercourse. Though I was not capable of ejaculation, my genitals were well developed and I even had a sprinkling of pubic hair. She noticed this and commented on it when she gave me my first bath. I paid no attention to her comment or her obvious interest in my sexual equipment at that time; but as the days passed she behaved in such a fashion that it was impossible, even at my age, to ignore her preoccupation with the whole matter of sex. Not only did she question me closely about the sex behavior of the natives; she also asked me many questions about my own experience. Maybe it was my casualness that led her on. . . . I don't know. At any rate, it wasn't long before she took to undressing before me—exhibiting herself, I guess you'd call it—and being provocative in a way I had never seen any woman behave. Native women and girls certainly never acted that way. Even in their complete nakedness there was a kind of modesty—or maybe it was just unconcern. But I soon understood that Miss Lilian was urging me on—and she succeeded. She didn't just take her clothes off those nights when she undressed in my room; she peeled herself like a strip-teaser, standing in front of the mirror of my bureau where she could see me lying naked on my bed.

"Well, it worked. One night after she had been there a few months she did her little act in front of the mirror and, watching her, I got an erection. I remember I tried to hide it—not out of shame, you understand, but because of some vague feeling that it was somehow not right to have her see it. It couldn't have been shame because shame and sex, then, had nothing to do with each other. Among the natives you'd often see kids walking around with erections, and sometimes even grown men; but nobody paid the slightest attention. Shame

among the natives was connected with other things—eating in the presence of others except at ceremonial banquets, failure to pay a debt, neglecting to employ the correct form of address to someone, doing anything taboo, these things occasioned shame, not things connected with sex. So what I felt when I got an erection watching Miss Lillian wasn't shame. Now I think it might have been a feeling of wrongfulness, a sort of prescience (if you like) of danger that this revelation of sexuality would betray me into behavior I should avoid. Let's put it this way. something in me revolted at the prospect of having any kind of sex with Miss Lillian and I tried to hide my erection to keep from doing it "

(Later Kirk understood this feeling he so painfully tried to describe during our first interviews. Both the feeling and its significance became clear when, during analysis, it was revealed that Miss Lillian was the first and only woman with whom Kirk had had intercourse. She was, of course, taboo for him, as were all white women—a consequence of his deeply unconscious incestuous fears. So the feeling Kirk was talking about is really connected with guilt—which explains not only this incident but its drastic immediate as well as long-term consequences.)

"Needless to say, Miss Lillian spotted my aroused state before I could hide it—and that was that. Her eyes got big and her chest heaved, and the next thing I knew she was crawling all over me.

"Well, that first attempt was unsuccessful for me—and so were the next few. But before long—probably because the hormones increased under such stimulation—I was able to have ejaculations. After that happened Miss Lillian was insatiable. She initiated intercourse two or three times every night and often during the day. I became a sort of sex toy for her. In this respect she had an inventive mind. I guess there wasn't a position or act she didn't experiment with.

"How did I feel about this? Well, I was of two minds. I'd be lying if I said I didn't enjoy some of it; but I'd be lying even more if I said it was all pleasure. It wasn't. There were times when I had to run away from her lust, lock her out of my room, or even threaten to tell the Commodore. Later, when I found out about her affair with the schoolteacher's husband, I'd threatened to tell him. But even worse was the physical debility from so much sexual activity—remember, I was only eleven years old. I grew vague and listless, haggard, run-down—maybe not from sex but certainly from loss of sleep and muscular fatigue. When I was unable to respond she would get furious. Sometimes she would beat me, claw at me with her nails, bite me. And when that wouldn't work—how she expected it to is beyond me!—she'd demand I satisfy her somehow, if not with some part of my person then with something artificial—a hairbrush, maybe, or whatever was handy. . . .



"If she had remained on the island much longer than she did, Miss Lillian, I think, would have headed into real trouble. However, the schoolteacher's husband, an Army officer, came along. I don't recall much about that. She sneaked off to see him a few times, and then one morning both of them were gone. Apparently they bribed the master of one of the merchant vessels and were smuggled aboard just before the ship sailed. She didn't even say good-by and I can't say I was very distressed about her going."

With Miss Lillian gone Kirk returned to his usual pursuits with an even greater sense of isolation. Brief as her stay had been, she had brought about an almost complete severance of the boy from his playmates, for she had been not only sexually possessive but jealous of attention paid to anyone other than herself, and had demanded his constant presence, his total preoccupation. After she left, there was no way of closing the gap his absence from the group had created, no way of resuming intimacy.

Other factors, also, now alienated Kirk. His experiences with the nymphomaniac governess had catapulted him into premature adulthood beyond the range of his friends and he could not have achieved fellowship with them even had they been willing. But most important was the fact that he assisted his own alienation unconsciously. It became his self-punishment for an awful, ever-present sense of guilt, and this, in turn, exacerbated the inferiority he already suffered. In a dim and at that time inexplicable way the boy became plagued with a kind of horror of his actions, a horror that can be compared with what the natives of his island felt when they trespassed the boundaries of taboo. His relationship with the native culture in which he was reared had deeply affected him, in his soul he was an islander. Therefore, his sexual behavior with the white woman, to whom he was related psychologically by common color and origins, was tantamount to incest, to a crossing of the invisible line no person of that culture could cross without punishment, sometimes inflicted by the group, more often by the person on himself. So, feeling that he had "sinned," Kirk, like any islander, was covered with guilt, which he chose to expiate by separation from society in the same manner as a native might by disappearing into the jungle.

In his isolation Kirk returned to his books, now his only friends. The fantasies which he had largely abandoned during Miss Lillian's residence once more claimed his attention. While outwardly engaged in reading, exploring the island, or studying with his new governess, he was inwardly living a full and exciting life. From the stories he read he constructed another and different universe, peopled with characters from the tales of his favorite authors and infused with vivid movement, dramatic event and colorful detail. In the beginning such fantasies were random, fitful, inconsistent and loosely constructed as

most daydreams tend to be. He did not concentrate on any given set of characters, events, or places, but freely developed whatever took his fancy—which then followed rather closely the book or story he happened to be reading. But all that changed in his twelfth year when a trivial coincidence altered the boy's life.

One day a large crate of books was delivered to the mission house. Kirk, whose appetite for books was well known to the missionary, was invited to borrow whatever he wished. Unlike most such deliveries, this turned out to be a windfall. Instead of the usual collection of sermons, dog-eared children's books, sets of inspirational essays, and biographies of characters unknown to anyone but the biographers, this shipment contained many novels, including a whole set of books by a highly imaginative and prolific writer. Glee-fully, Kirk took his pick and settled himself for a season of pleasure.

The first book Kirk chose to read was a novel by a famous English author. He had already made this writer's acquaintance through other books, which he had enjoyed immensely, and now looked forward to a tale whose interest was guaranteed. He had hardly begun reading, however, when he suddenly became aware of the fact that the name of the hero of this novel was the same as his own. Momentarily, this gave him pause. As he describes it, "a kind of shock ran through me for a minute I felt completely disoriented." This feeling dissolved rapidly and Kirk returned to the book. But now he read with greater interest, and as the story unrolled he found himself intent and involved as never before. When he finished the book—the same day he had begun it—he turned immediately to the first page and read it through again. After a third reading he finally set the book aside.

Several days later the experience of encountering a fictional character bearing his name was repeated—this time in a volume of semiphilosophical reflections by an American stylist of the 'twenties. The discovery once more shocked Kirk; it led him into passionate participation in the book, followed by so many rereadings that parts of it were automatically committed to memory.

It was not long after these two experiences that Kirk again came across his own name applied to a character of fiction. This time, however, the experience caused no shock of surprise. Kirk says, "I think I expected it somehow, and when it happened it was as if I had known it all the time and was finding something that had been lost." On this occasion the character who bore his name was the protagonist in a long series of fantasies by another American author. Through volume after volume of strange and adventurous tales this figure weaved a perilous way as all-conquering hero—a prototype for the modern Superman. Fascinated, Kirk followed. And soon there came about in him an uncanny transformation which can be described only in his own words. . . .

"As I read about the adventures of Kirk Allen in these books the conviction began to grow on me that the stories were not only true to the very last detail but that they were about *me*. In some weird and inexplicable way *I knew that what I was reading was my biography*. Nothing in these books was unfamiliar to me. I recognized everything—the scenes, the people, the furnishings of rooms, the events, even the words that were spoken—recognized all this with a sense of familiarity that one has when he sees a house in which he has lived or a friend from years gone by. The whole business, if you like, was one long, almost interminable, *déjà vu* experience—as you psychologists call it. My everyday life began to recede at this point. In fact, it became fiction—and, as it did, the books became my reality. To daily affairs, to the task of staying alive, eating, studying, moving about on the island, I gave little attention—for this was dream. Real life—*my* real life—was in the books. There I lived. There I had my being."

Kirk read the numerous volumes of his "biography" over and over again until he was as familiar with them as with his own reflection in the mirror. Soon he no longer needed the books "to refresh my memory," but was able to recapitulate them entirely in his mind. While his corporeal body was living the life of a mundane boy, the vital part of him was far off on another planet, courting beautiful princesses, governing provinces, warring with strange enemies. But it should not be thought that he was content during this period after the books were discarded merely to rehearse the experiences recorded in them. Now, using "his biographer's" material as a base, he took off on his own. Assisted by the maps, charts, diagrams, architectural layouts, genealogical schemes and timetables painstakingly worked out while using the books for his guide, he filled in spaces between the volumes with fantasy "recollections" of his own, and when this was done, he began the task of his life that of picking up where his "biographer" had left off and recording the subsequent history of the heroic Kirk Allen. Of this immense undertaking I shall have more to say later. Now it is time to return to our sketch of the pedestrian existence of our subject.

When Kirk was fourteen his father, the Commodore, died. Almost immediately his mother awakened from her ten-year apathy and prepared to leave the island. She arranged for Kirk to be admitted to a preparatory school in the eastern part of the United States, accompanied him there, and when satisfied that he had settled in the school, she left to begin a restless Odyssey. For fifteen years thereafter, until she died on an island off the Greek coast, she moved about the world. Only occasionally during these years did she visit Kirk, and then but briefly, nor did she write to him except when it became necessary to discuss financial matters.

Meanwhile, Kirk entered a new type of existence, very different from the one he had known, yet marked as before by loneliness and isolation. He found it all but impossible to relate to his school fellows casually, and although he made a few friends there—and later at the University—he was unable to enter into real companionship with anyone. He devoted himself to his studies, in which he progressed with amazing rapidity, and to the development of his fantasies. During holidays he either remained at school or visited the homes of his stepbrothers. Occasionally he went on solitary walking tours.

At nineteen Kirk entered one of the great Eastern universities. Here his interests solidified and he pointed his effort toward a career in science. Three years later he matriculated for advanced study. His scientific talents were immediately recognized by his professors. After the first semester he was given a research fellowship under the joint auspices of the University and the United States Government. When he completed the requirements for his doctoral degree he was mustered into military service and assigned to a special project then approaching a significant conclusion. When the Second World War ended (in a manner that had something to do with Kirk's work) he was discharged. There followed a year of study abroad under a much-coveted grant. When he returned he was invited to join the project at X Reservation.

Throughout the years between the discovery of his "biography" and his appearance in Baltimore, a large segment of Kirk's time and a portion of his mind were devoted to the detailed development of his abiding fantasy. Whenever he was not totally preoccupied with scholastic or scientific work—and often even then, since his fantasy and his research interests (and assignments) coincided in certain ways—he was engaged in weaving an ever more closely knit imaginative mental life, the main lines of which were dictated by the recorded "biography" he had consumed so avidly on the island before the age of fourteen. But, over the years, some remarkable changes were made in his mode of fantasizing, changes which brought him always closer to the breaking point signaled by his arrival in Baltimore. Here is how Kirk describes it:

"As you know, I became convinced the books were about me, that somehow the author had obtained a knowledge of my life and had written its story. So the first thing I had to do was remember, and it seemed to me that I actually recalled everything he described. It was, of course, a curious position to be in—an adolescent boy remembering the adventures of himself as a grown man. But I got around this difficulty by convincing myself that the books had been composed in the future and had been sent back by some means into the present for my instruction. It's hard to explain, but I soon developed the notion—now a favorite one with science-fiction writers—

of the co-existence of temporal dimensions so that the past and the future are simultaneous with the present. This made it possible to live a current life but, all the same, to *remember the future*.

"My first effort, then, was to remember. I started by fixing in my mind, and later on paper in the form of maps, genealogical tables, and so on, what the author of my 'biography' had put down. When I had this mastered, by remembering I was able to correct his errors, fill in many details, and close gaps between one volume of the biography and the next. It took some years and an enormous amount of effort to accomplish this; but when it was done I had the tremendous satisfaction of knowing that I possessed the complete story of my life up to a certain point, and I was able to review it—actually live it in my head—while I carried on my everyday business. At any time of the day or night, with hardly any effort, I could select an incident or adventure and, while appearing to be doing what was expected of me at that moment, I would actually be living a completely different life by a simultaneous process of recall of the past and experience in the present. I know it sounds complicated, but it wasn't, and if it was, it was not nearly so complex as what happened next.

"After some time I became bored with reliving my future life and intrigued with the question of what was going to happen to Kirk Allen—or, from where I sat, what *had* happened to him—after the place at which the writer's 'biography' ended. You will recall that when the series of volumes ends, Kirk Allen is still a young and vigorous man. So I set myself the task of remembering what was going to happen to me beyond the point reached by my 'biographer.' There were no guide-lines for this, so the job became terribly difficult. One of the great difficulties, by the way, was to distinguish between imagination and recall. I knew how easy it would be merely to imagine a future for Kirk Allen and fool myself into believing it. But I wanted truth—curious as this may seem to you—and I determined doggedly only to remember. The mental discipline this required was terrific. I found it was so easy to fool myself that many times I abandoned the job in disgust and returned to the now simple process of recalling what had been recorded. But I always turned back to the task and soon developed a technique for distinguishing between—don't laugh!—imagination and recall. I discovered that always, when I imagined, some small detail, usually an insignificant thing—a color, a view, a costume, a name . . . something—was out of place; but when I *remembered*, everything fit. Pursuing this technique, I became remarkably adept at distinguishing between the reality of my recollections of the unrecorded future and the imaginative excursions to which I was so liable. For many years I devoted myself to this operation—indeed, until I returned from abroad and began work on the project I was on when I came here. And as I

continued this process of—what?—predictive recall?—I kept careful records of it, writing down and preserving every detail

“When I got back from Europe the whole business took a new turn. Here’s what happened.

“One night soon after moving to the X Reservation I was preparing a map of a territory Kirk Allen had explored during an expedition to a planet in another galaxy. I won’t stop to explain this—you’ll find it in the papers I’m going to give you. Anyhow, I was working on this map very determinedly, stopping only now and then to refresh my memory. Somehow the details refused to come clear, although I had a vivid memory of flying over the territory at a fairly low altitude and taking stereoscopic photographs of it. I also remembered that when I arrived back at my home planet from this adventure, I gave a set of the pictures to the proper scientists at the Inter-galactic Institute, but kept copies of the originals for myself, planning to study them more closely later. I even remembered exactly where they were—in a filing cabinet in a secret room in my palace. I tried to recall whether I had ever looked at the photos after filing them, but I could not and concluded Kirk Allen had simply put them away and forgotten them. Well, the unfinished map lay before me on my drafting board, while the information I needed to correct and complete the map was more remote from me in space than the furthest star I could see, and far ahead of me in time. It was the first time I had encountered such a situation—ordinarily my memory served me perfectly—and I was perplexed and angry, as frustrated as I have ever been. I thought of those blasted photographs stuck away there in a place no one but I could get to. I wracked my brains trying to recall the landscape I had flown over, and the pictures I had glanced at casually before putting them away. No use. I was furious. I cursed myself for not looking at them more closely when I had them. And then I thought. ‘If only . . . if only I were there, right now, I would go directly to those files and get those pictures!’

“No sooner had I given voice to this thought than my whole being seemed to respond with a resounding ‘Why not?’—and in that same moment I *was* there!

“How can I explain this to you? One moment I was just a scientist on X Reservation bending over a drawing board in a clap-board B.Q. in the middle of an American desert,—the next moment I was Kirk Allen, Lord of a planet in an interplanetary empire in a distant universe, garbed in the robes of his exalted office, rising from the carved desk he had been sitting at, walking toward a secret room in his palace, entering it, going over to a filing cabinet in a recess in the wall, extracting an envelope of photographs, leaving the room and retracing his steps, sitting again at his desk, and studying the pictures with intense concentration.

"It was over in a matter of minutes, and I was again at the drawing board!—the self you see here. But I knew the experience was real, and to prove it I now had a vivid recollection of the photographs, could see them as clearly as if they were still in my hands, and had no trouble at all completing the map.

"You can imagine how this experience affected me. I was stunned by it, shaken to the core, but excited as I had never been. In some way I could not comprehend, by merely desiring it to be so, I had crossed the immensities of Space, broken out of Time, and merged with—literally become—that distant and future self whose like I had until now been remembering. Don't ask me to explain. I can't, although God knows I've tried! Have I discovered the secret of teleportation? Do I have some special psychic equipment? Some unique organ or what Charles Fort called a 'wild talent'? Damned if I know!

"From that night on I have spent more and more time being the Kirk Allen of the future. At any time, no matter where I am or what I am doing, I can will to be him, and at once I am. As him, as my future self, I live his life; and when I return to this present self, I bring back the memories I have of that future and so am able to correct the records I am keeping. Now, you see, I no longer have to depend on memory. I actually live what the future Kirk Allen lives; and return here to amend or add to the biography, to the maps and tables and other stuff I will give you to examine. Please don't ask me how I get back to this present self—I can't tell you any more than I can tell you how I *become* him by merely wishing. When I am him, I don't seem to know of this earthly self—I guess I've forgotten it somehow—so I could not wish to return. It just happens—that's all.

"But there is one thing more I should tell you, and that is that I am aware of a great disparity in the passage of time between events in the lives of these two selves. My existence here, in this present, goes at a pace you'd call normal; while as Kirk Allen of the future time goes fast, seems compressed. What I mean is that the time I spend as *him*—although as him I experience it at a normal pace—compresses into only minutes on the clock my mundane self keeps. So I live perhaps a year or more as *that* Kirk Allen in a few minutes of *this* Kirk Allen's time. But what got me into trouble, I think, and led to my being sent here, is the fact that I've been spending more and more of my time as the other Kirk Allen, leading more and more the life there, going more frequently and staying longer. I don't think I can be blamed for this—his is such an exciting life compared with mine, but of course I have a job to do here. . . ."

The life history of Kirk, as I have set it down here, took some days to obtain. Although always polite and cooperative he was reluctant to part with its intimate details and they had to be extracted

from him by careful, sometimes subtle, questioning. The chief difficulty, however, was that he regarded himself as completely normal, was thoroughly convinced of the reality of all that he experienced, and could not comprehend its significance in terms of his sanity. He acknowledged, of course, that his experiences were extraordinary, that they were, to put it mildly, fantastic, but he believed, as he said, that they were due to some unknown psychic quality or ability with which he had been somehow endowed. And toward this unknown factor he had a casual attitude if it was there—and it evidently was—he would make the most of it, he would exploit it, he would enjoy it. Why it should interest anyone else, especially why it should cause such a fuss, he could not understand. When I asked him if he ever intended to share his secret with the world, he replied that he could not. He felt, he said incapable of communicating it to others since he was totally ignorant of why or how he was able to do what he did. However, he had thought someday to publish the material he was collecting. He would do this, perhaps, as fiction—since he could not expect the world to acknowledge it as fact. Maybe he would release the information as “biographical romances,” as his “biographer” had done, as tales amending the errors of the available volumes and continuing them beyond the point at which they left off.

“Then why,” I asked him, “are you so compulsive about getting every detail absolutely correct? If you merely intend to present all of this as fiction, does it really matter if an occasional comma is misplaced?”

“You don’t seem to understand,” Kirk said with a small sigh for my obvious stupidity, “you don’t seem to understand that this is *my* life I’m investigating. I want to know everything about it. I’m careful—compulsive, you say—for *my* sake. It matters to *me*. It has to be right for *me*”

From our initial talks—devoted chiefly, as I have said, to gathering the history outlined—I received two impressions. The first was of Kirk’s utter madness, the second, of the life-sustaining necessity of his psychosis. As regards the former, what was of paramount significance to me as a therapist was the fact I have already mentioned: Kirk’s inability to comprehend, to admit even to himself, his mental abnormality (or, to put it another way, the abnormality of his experiences). Now the lay reader may be surprised at these statements: he perhaps thinks that a conviction of sanity is an element in every instance of psychosis, that the person involved is so “far gone” that he does not know he is mad. But this is not so—or at least it is only so in that proportion of cases where brain and central nervous system have been debilitated by toxins or disease. For the most part psychotics are aware of their disturbance, aware



either because they suffer somehow through it or are made to suffer for it by others. In only the rarest circumstance does a mentally afflicted person escape suffering, and hence an acute knowledge of his own disorder. But such a one was Kirk: his madness was a private one, an insanity nourished in and by the isolation he had known since early childhood, an insanity that had been slow to reveal itself, slow to affect his external relationships, slow to cause him any distress. And what he experienced now that his psychosis had, so to speak, been made public, was not of a distressful nature: the shock expressed by his supervisor, Bagby, and the doctor at X Reservation, only amused him. Against the wall of Kirk's absolute conviction of sanity—a phenomenon so rare—I was, at first, completely helpless.

The second impression—that Kirk's very life was sustained wholly by his madness—rendered his case even more difficult to handle. While it is true that every psychosis represents a life-saving maneuver on the part of the individual, is his way of solving the conflict between the world and himself, in practically every instance there remains some area of life that—through therapy or otherwise—can be made to yield satisfactions comparable to those available to the person through his madness. In the case of Kirk, it seemed, there was none. What, after all, could compete with the unending gratifications of his fantasy? What could I or anyone offer him in exchange for this elaborate edifice of imagination that, stone by stone, he had reared over the long years? I knew, in short, that without the fantasy Kirk could not *be*—that he *was* only in his dramatic imaginative life. How, then, could he be restored to sanity and yet remain alive?

I pondered these and other questions for many days. Meanwhile, Kirk turned over to me all of his records. By now his trunks had arrived in Baltimore, and while he busied himself finding a suitable place to live, and then settled in for what promised to be a long stay—for I had decided by this time to treat him despite the difficulties of the case—I began my study of the material he had collected over the years.

It is impossible to convey more than a bare impression of Kirk's "records." In the space at my disposal here I can hardly do more than itemize. There were, to begin with, about twelve thousand pages of typescript comprising the amended "biography" of Kirk Allen. This was divided into some 200 chapters and read like fiction. Appended to these pages were approximately 2,000 more of notes in Kirk's handwriting, containing corrections necessitated by his more recent "researches," and a huge bundle of scraps and jottings on envelopes, receipted bills, laundry slips, sheets from memo pads, etc. These latter were largely incomprehensible since they were written in Kirk's private shorthand, while some of them were little more than hasty designs or sketches, mathematical equations, or symbolic repre-

sentations of something or other: each, however, was carefully numbered and lettered with red pencil to indicate where it belonged in the main script.

Apart from the bulky manuscript with its appendix and notes there were:

a glossary of names and terms that ran to more than 100 pages  
82 full-color maps carefully drawn to scale, 23 of planetary bodies in four projections, 31 of land masses on these planets, 14 labeled "Kirk Allen's Expedition to——," the remainder of cities on the various planets: 161 architectural sketches and elevations, some colored, some drawn only in ink but all carefully scaled and annotated: 12 genealogical tables: an 18-page description of the galactic system in which Kirk Allen's home planet was contained, with 4 astronomical charts, one for each of the seasons, and 9 star maps of the skies from observatories on other planets in the system: a 200-page history of the empire Kirk Allen ruled, with a 3-page table of dates and names of battles or outstanding historical events: a series of 44 folders containing from 2 to 20 pages apiece, each dealing with some aspect of the planet over which Kirk Allen of the future ruled, with life in his imperial city, or with a phase of existence on this planet or elsewhere in the system; typical titles, neatly printed on these folders, were, "The Fauna of Srom Olma I," "The Transportation System of Seraneb," "Science of Srom," "The Geology of Srom Olma I," "The Metabiology of the Valley Dwellers," "The History of the Intergalactic Scientific Institute," "Parapsychology of Srom Norbra X," "Economic Foundations of the Valley Society," "Sociology on Srom Olma I," "The Application of Unified Field Theory and the Mechanics of the Stardrive to Space Travel," "The Unique Brain Development of the Crystopeds of Srom Norbra X," "Anthropological Studies on Srom Olma I," "The Religious Beliefs of the Valley Dwellers," "Manufacturing Processes and Dye Chemistry," "Fire Worship and Sacrifice on Srom Sodrat II," "Food Distribution in Seraneb," "Sex Habits and Practices of the Crystopeds," "Plant Biology and Genetic Science of Srom Olma I," and so on finally, 306 drawings, some in water colors, some in chalk, some in crayon, of people, animals, plants, insects, weapons, utensils, machines, articles of clothing, vehicles, instruments and furniture. . . .

Such was the material Kirk Allen placed at my disposal for study at the beginning of his therapy. The reader can imagine for himself my dismay at the sheer bulk of this matter: I do not know if he can appreciate with what misgivings I approached the task of weaning this man from his madness.

The atmosphere in which Kirk's therapy commenced was a poor one to begin with. As I have said, he was assured of his sanity and

regarded the whole thing as a joke. More than this, he was here with me in Baltimore under the most inauspicious conditions for treatment, since he had not come of his own volition. The authorities had sent him, demanding he be treated not only for his sake but because they feared that in his disturbed condition he was a poor security risk who could neither be kept on the job nor discharged so long as he remained the way he was. As for him, although he resented the implications of what was happening, he obeyed with a faintly grudging good grace. In his behavior toward me he acted the part of a noble opponent who courteously permits his antagonist to choose the time, the place, even the weapons of their encounter. Unfailingly polite, respectful almost to the point of burlesque, he submitted to my ministrations, attempted to follow my instructions to the letter, and gave me every possible scope for my activities. For my part I saw at once that all his politeness, his courtesy, his respectfulness, was little more than the mask for a deep antagonism. Beneath this mask—betrayed, indeed, by its very presence—lurked hostility and, perhaps, even fear. In a dim way, I saw, Kirk too appreciated the necessity of his psychosis, appreciated that his very life depended upon its maintenance. And despite his outward show of unconcern, his forceful defense of his sanity, and his stubborn insistence on the validity of his experiences—despite these, the small doubt implanted by the action of the authorities as well as my decision to treat him threatened the structure essential to his existence. My declaration that I would accept him for treatment could only mean I considered him mad, and the fear this provoked induced hostility, which Kirk disguised, in these early days, as excessive politeness.

The situation between us was thus a very tense one when, the history having been collected, the "records" inspected, and the therapeutic scenery set, I prepared to begin the treatment of this patient in earnest. So far as I could, from the beginning I ignored the aspect of "challenge" implied in Kirk's attitude. I tried, that is, to avoid giving in any way the impression that I was entering the lists with him to prove that he was psychotic, that this was to be a tug of war over the question of his sanity. Instead, because it was obvious that both his temperament and training were scientific, I set myself to capitalize on the one quality he had demonstrated throughout his life, the quality that had inspired his first attempts to deal with his loneliness, the quality that urged him toward a scientific career: his curiosity.

It will be recalled that while Kirk was untroubled by the question of the validity of his parapsychic experiences, he acknowledged ignorance about the mechanics of their operation. He talked vaguely of "teleportation," a special in-built psychic "organ," a highly developed "telepathic" sense, or a "wild talent" of some kind. On the pretext of discovering just how he did all the remarkable things he

reported and, beneath this, just why it was he, Kirk Allen, to whom these special gifts were given, I strove to enlist his active participation in treatment. This meant, of course, that at least for the time being I "accepted" the validity of his experiences, the "truth" of the material in the records, the "facts" of Kirk's curious reports of travel through time and space.

When Kirk appreciated that we had achieved a common ground where we could work together on a problem that intrigued him so; when he understood that I was not out to prove him "crazy" and that, therefore, I constituted no threat to the careful but unstable structure on which his entire existence was based, he dropped his defenses and fell to the mutual task with enthusiasm.

For many months, motivated thusly by his curiosity and given tremendous impetus by the security he felt in our relationship, Kirk and I progressed swiftly toward the goal we had set ourselves. Always holding in abeyance the primary question, always suspending decision on it—indeed, always ignoring that such a question existed—we concentrated on the problem of the moment, the problem which may be phrased as: What had happened to Kirk to render him "sensitive" to the extraordinary experiences he reported? Our emphasis was, of course, on his actual biography, on the formative events, relationships and associations of his childhood and adolescence. Nevertheless, so that he should not lack the assurance that no detail was being overlooked in our pursuit of an answer to this problem, I consented to—as a matter of fact, even urged him toward—the exploration of additional means to discovering the source or sources of his "sensitivity." Accordingly, from time to time Kirk submitted to various examinations I arranged for him. Under an assumed name he put himself through the Diagnostic Clinic at the John Hopkins Hospital, received a thorough-going neurological examination including electroencephalogram, air-injection engrams, and X-ray studies of his cranium from an outstanding neurologist of my acquaintance, was surveyed thoroughly by an endocrinologist, and even studied in meticulous detail by a physical anthropologist. Needless to say, the outcome of all these elaborate tests and measurements was nil in very respect save the psychological Kirk was distressingly average.

Since it is not my intention here to deal at length with Kirk's analysis—particularly with the dynamics of his disturbance—but rather to tell a more personal tale, I shall attend only briefly to the findings arrived at during the early months of treatment. Suffice to say that by the end of this period I was in a position to formulate, at least to my own satisfaction, the underlying psychic factors accounting for his psychosis. Briefly, they were as follows:

As the reader has suspected, it all went back to the very earliest years of his life when the child was isolated, cut off, and forced to

live in an arid emotional waste wherein his deepest needs were left unsatisfied. Quite likely the incident that was to prove traumatic for him and determine, to a great extent, his future pattern, occurred when his family so abruptly severed his almost symbiotic relationship with the Polynesian nurse, Myna. Until then he had lived in her protecting and nourishing shadow, with all his needs, biological and emotional, gratified. After that event, however, a most radical alteration took place in his world; not only was he denied access to what had by now become for him the fountainhead of his security, but with this enforced separation the pivotal point of his contact with the universe was lost. He could not, that is to say, even communicate with others, nor could he employ any of his former techniques of behavior to obtain that which he—or any child—required for normal development. And while the period of this separation from Myna was brief, the experience was poignant enough to induce anxiety to such a degree that his infant mind, threatened with permanent engulfment, strained to master it by the only means available at that stage: fantasy.

The first world Kirk built for himself was constructed at an age when most children are consolidating the gains of infancy and passing into a childhood in which the chief mental operation is the testing of reality. This was a phase through which Kirk, then, never went; and it left him with a stunted capacity to distinguish between the real world and that which was the product of his own mental functioning. So far as the details of this first interior world are concerned, we have little to inform us because of Kirk's hazy recollection. We can assume, however, that its characteristics were determined by the same factors that were always to underwrite his fantasizing. Converting his loneliness, his littleness, his feelings of rejection, his childish helplessness, and his miserably deprived and inferior state to their opposites, then (as later) he was undoubtedly the obverse of these in his fantasied person: the master rather than the victim of events and things.

So much for the first manifestations of Kirk's disorder and their determinants. There followed then the generation of those elements responsible for the two most intriguing and characteristic qualities of Kirk's fantasizing: the qualities of time and distance.

Myna, it will be recalled, was restored to Kirk, but not until the separation damage described had been done, and not to the degree of intimacy that had obtained prior to the rude divorce of the child from this one person who mattered. Moreover, her return and the removal of the Commodore's family to the mandated island coincided, and were followed in relatively swift succession, by Kirk's mother's virtual retirement and the subsequent death of the faithful Polynesian nurse. These events had also to be mastered by the boy, and so they were by the imaginative manipulations now familiar to him. But during

this period, produced both by the events themselves and by normal processes common to all children there entered into Kirk's psychological development more and more the elements of aggression and hostility.

Frustrated in all of his affectional aspirations, isolated and turned in upon himself, Kirk began to nourish intense feelings of hatred which rapidly declared themselves in destructive fantasies. Because he could not tolerate the devastating emotions to which continual denial of his natural needs gave birth—emotions that provoked urges to aggress, to hate, and to destroy—he adopted a defense designed at once to discharge the accompanying feelings while protecting him from their effects. This he did, at first, by employing distance, and later time, as the central features of his fantasies. Now, removed from him by these convenient mechanisms, both instinctual and frustration-provoked impulses were rendered more tolerable. That is to say, he could tolerate his inner turmoil and the accompanying negative feelings by converting them to the stuff of fantasy and then projecting such fantasies to distant scenes and other times. Accordingly, in the years between Myna's death and his discovery of the books of his "biography," Kirk's fantasies acquired three new aspects: they became less innocuous in content, were removed from his immediate neighborhood to progressively further places, and tended more and more to be set outside his present time.

When the books came into Kirk's possession he unconsciously seized upon them as a perfect vehicle of defense. The premature sexual experiences with Miss Lilian, especially their intensive, guilt-laden, animal-like character, had increased his burden of inner hostility, his smoldering aggressiveness, and his destructive urgings. The capacity to divert these thoughts and feelings through fantasy projection was breaking down, not because he lacked imaginative invention but simply because no fantasy structure he could then envision with his limited reality resources was powerful enough to carry the tremendous weight of his negative impulses. The discovery of the books, then, was a life-saving accident.

It needed no more than the fortuitous correspondence of names to create the bridge across which Kirk traveled from painful reality to all-satisfying fantasy. Through vistas evoked by the books, the endless scope for his impulses, urges and needs became available. With boundless universes of space and endless maneuverability in time at his immediate command, he could no longer be threatened by inner ragings. Within the limitless cosmos and its temporal infinitude, no matter how strong these became they could be—and were—absorbed totally, leaving him unaffected. And in the years to come, it goes without saying, he needed these light-years of distance, these eons of time, for, after his father's death and during the lonely period that followed,

the inner rage, bitterness and fury grew to frightening proportions.

The first strange shift in the mechanics of fantasizing that Kirk reported—the shift from merely recalling what had been written in the “biography” to amending it by imaginative excursion beyond the confines of the books—was revealed by analysis to have been a natural psychic consequence of his strange development. Apparently the “biography” was unable to supply all of Kirk’s requirements for discharge of anxiety and mastery of experience, and when he reached this point he was forced to invent new material—or alter the old—so that it would take account of his needs more adequately. To discover this mental “gimmick” was one of the simpler tasks of Kirk’s analysis. Its disclosure carried us far along the path of reconstructing his life in its finest details, for with this insight employed as a skeleton key to his past, it became possible to show him, eventually, how (and why) an almost one-to-one correspondence existed between his fantasy constructs and his actual past experiences. That is to say, in order to master his past and relieve its anxious consequences, each event was *transformed* to a bit of fantasy and, in that guise, assisted by the time and distance factors, was more easily handled.

The second shift in technique—that from recall of the future beyond the “biography’s” scope and amendment of detail to correspond with real experience—was again a natural defensive psychic maneuver, but a maneuver necessitated by a new element that entered Kirk’s life soon after he settled in his job at X Reservation.

As I have written, the Miss Lillian episode had been Kirk’s first and only venture into sexual activity. It was, the reader will remember, a devastating transaction for the boy, awakening in him remote incestuous longings and their consequent effects of fear and guilt. These emotions, indeed, may be said to have precipitated Kirk’s flight into the more serious reaches of unreality: it is even likely that had there been no Miss Lillian there would have been lacking that special sensitivity required to respond so drastically to the stimulus of the “biography” and Kirk might have developed more normally. In any case, following his shattering encounter with the nymphomaniac governess, Kirk shunned sexual experience in reality and avoided, as much as he could, all relationships with women. In his fantasy life, however, where it was safe, he was not only sexually alert but a notorious and successful lover. This was the situation when on taking up his assignment at X Reservation, Kirk found himself once more threatened by sex.

Among the scientists working with Kirk on the project at X was an attractive geologist who had recently been divorced. She was slightly older than Kirk, an intelligent, vivacious, witty woman of wide social experience who was also internationally famous for her work. The only unattached female member of the scientific staff, she was in great demand among the men, most of whom were bachelors.

Nevertheless, it was Kirk who interested her and on him that she exerted all her charm. Of this quality she must have had an abundance, since she succeeded where many other girls had failed and rapidly developed a close association with the preoccupied young physicist. Soon they were meeting frequently, attending occasional social functions together, and sharing as a couple whatever entertainments the isolated community had to offer. Kirk, however, regarded this association otherwise than his friend—for him it was a pleasant companionship in which the gender of his partner was incidental, and it was his intention to keep it that way. The girl had other plans. She soon began to behave in a manner that distressed him, that awakened once more his dread of sex. The more reticent he acted, the bolder her advances became, until a point was reached where her demands for sex were overt and unequivocal. When this happened Kirk attempted to dissolve the relationship, but she would not have it so and pursued him relentlessly. Employing every wile at her command, she attempted to seduce him, and he, thus threatened, sought desperately to escape.

On the night Kirk achieved for the first time what he was thereafter to regard as the most crucial experience in his life—the illusion of actual tenancy of the body and being of the future Kirk Allen on another planet—his problem with the fair geologist had reached a climax. He had dined with her in her apartment and after dinner she had made a frank sexual overture which literally scared him out of his wits. In great agitation he fled to his own room and, in an effort to calm himself, turned to his “records.” In his preoccupation with them, it seems, the solution of complete flight into unreality appeared as the best available means whereby his threatened self could be preserved, and he unconsciously seized upon it. Thereafter, it became his “escape hatch” from intolerable actuality.

What is of great interest to the psychoanalyst, of course, is the fact that this solution of total flight into fantasy occurred to Kirk while he was consciously engaged in the preparation of a map. It is notorious that maps, charts, architectural plans and other similar material often have the unconscious symbolic significance of the human form, especially of curiosity or perplexity regarding sexual details. In the incident that precipitated the new pattern of Kirk’s fantasizing, then, it can be seen with unusual clarity how remarkably effective fantasy is as a defense against unconscious pressures—not only are problems or strains relegated to a time and place that render them harmless, but there, in addition, they are solved or relieved.

By the end of the first year of analysis, although we had moved rapidly and accumulated much information, Kirk and I found ourselves in a most curious position. By this time we had been able to work out the entire mechanics of the gigantic fantasy, we had traced its



sources to their roots, and we had even elaborated, in meticulous detail, the one-to-one correspondence of experiential fact with imaginative feature. But none of this affected my patient's behavior to the slightest degree. Although he conceded that the foundations of his psychosis (which we still avoided calling by this name) rested in the past, although he recognized it as the self-salvaging maneuver of escape from reality it was, although he understood as well as I the why and how of its operation—nevertheless, he showed no inclination to abandon it. Almost daily he entered the strange realm of his elaborate preoccupation, returning therefrom each time with some exciting bit of news or some colorful item to add to the "records." Outwardly he maintained the façade of an integrated and well-functioning person. Since he was free to dispose of his time and energy as he pleased, and had no other obligation than to keep his appointments with me, he was in an enviable position to lead a leisurely and uncomplicated life. To keep himself busy he attended lectures at the universities in and near Baltimore, made acquaintances among the scientists here, and participated casually in the intellectual life of the community. In sum, he was quite content.

I, on the other hand, was not. More than this, I was downright unhappy over the situation and perplexed as I have never been before about a patient. For I saw that the gains we had made against Kirk's madness were more apparent than real, that the only success I had had—if, indeed, this paltry accomplishment could be attributed to the analysis—was the minor one of holding my patient in treatment and keeping his condition relatively stable. By this I mean that, at least, Kirk had not gone further into his psychosis, that there had been no increment in the extent of his involvement in the weird fantasy, that he was fixed in it at approximately the same place as when he arrived in Baltimore the previous year.

For weeks I wrestled with the problem of what to do. In rapid succession I ran through every technique, device, even trick of therapy I knew or had heard of or read about. Nightly I pored over my notes, thinking long and hard about this strange case. More and more, between the times we met for his hours, I found myself preoccupied with Kirk's analysis, and less and less with my other patients.

Readers who are unfamiliar with my previous writings will wonder here why I did not admit failure and refer Kirk elsewhere, say to a psychiatrist who might employ one of the more drastic methods such as shock treatment. This I could not do, not only because I was then and still am reluctant to admit defeat until every possible psychotherapeutic avenue has been explored, but because I could not conscientiously expose this patient (or, indeed, any other) either to the experience of such treatment or to its possible negative effects. I am one of the more vocal antagonists of such "heroic" measures as con-

vulsive "therapy" and the psychosurgical methods, believing most sincerely that they violate every progressive canon of therapy and convinced they do more harm than good, either immediately or in the long run. It seems to me the height of absurdity to blast or cut the very portion of the brain on which both the individual's and the species' welfare depends, to say nothing of the fact that all our evidence points to the temporary nature of the "cures" achieved and the irreversible damage done to the personality thus treated. Especially in Kirk's case would I regard the employment of such methods with abhorrence. His psychosis notwithstanding, he had a fine brain, a basically well-motivated personality, and showed promise of being—when freed from the debilitation of his disorder—one of those valuable persons on whom the future of our civilization depends. No; I could not, if there was any way to prevent it, consign him to the new kind of vegetable kingdom being created by so many of my well-intentioned but mistaken colleagues.

Why, then, it may be asked by other readers—this time readers acquainted with my work—did I not employ hypnosis? The answer to this is obvious. Kirk's hold on reality was tenuous enough as it was, and I frankly feared to break the thin thread by which his connection with this world was maintained. I cannot say for sure whether hypnosis would have had this effect, but I confess I was afraid it might.

It was during one of Kirk's hours at the time of my deepest despair over being unable to help him that I suddenly decided there remained but a single unexplored way to handle his case. In a sudden flash of inspiration it came to me that in order to separate Kirk from his madness it was necessary for me to enter his fantasy and, from that position, to pry him loose from the psychosis.

The idea of participating in the psychosis of a patient is anything but new. Therapists have been doing it for many years, but it was such brilliant workers as John Rosen, Milton Wexler, and others who formulated the principles of the technique and described its mode of operation. Their fascinating accounts of the method had already appeared in the literature by the time I came to treat Kirk, and I had read their papers with more than usual interest. But I had never utilized the method myself, nor had I as yet observed the work, as I was later to do. Equipped, therefore, with only a handful of general propositions to prepare me for this enterprise, and only vaguely aware of its hazards, but driven to it by necessity, I took the first steps toward personal involvement in the weird yet magnificent fantasy that had heretofore belonged solely to Kirk.

I began by steeping myself in the "records." For days on end, employing every spare moment, I studied the mass of material Kirk had given me until I knew it so well that the most insignificant detail was engraved in my memory. Naturally, such intensive study brought

to light many inconsistencies, and it was with these that I started my new assault on Kirk's psychosis. What I did was confront him with an error in logic, a mistake in calculation, or a difference in description between one part of the "record" and another, and demand that he "fix" it. Often this required that Kirk make another "trip" into the future, from where he would "return" with the necessary information and, together, we would correct whatever deficiency was involved. A good example of what actually took place during our meetings is the following:

On a morning some weeks after I had begun to use the new approach, Kirk arrived at my office for his regular appointment. When he came into the room I was sitting at the desk studying the two astronomical charts and nine star maps Kirk had prepared, and the manuscript of a descriptive section of his "records" dealing with astronomical research. Since we were not using the couch in this phase of our work, he drew up a chair. For a few minutes he watched while I worked, glancing in turn at me, at the maps, and at the pad of scratch paper on which I had jotted down some figures. My silent concentration on the materials before me eventually produced—as I knew it would—sufficient tension to cause him to break the quiet.

"What's wrong?" he asked.

"Plenty," I replied, throwing down my pencil and lighting a cigarette. "These distances are all fouled up. Either your astronomical projection from Srom Norbra X is wrong or the star maps are way off. They just don't make sense. Look here . . ."

For the next quarter hour I reviewed an error in distance between certain suns in the fanciful galaxy where Kirk Allen's home planet was located—an error I had happily discovered the previous evening—and showed him that his maps could not possibly be correct in view of this mistake. He was very upset by this, took a pencil from his breast pocket, and made many rapid calculations on the back of one of the maps. When he finished he frowned and leaned back in his chair.

"I don't understand it," he said. "I could swear I copied those maps exactly from the originals at the Institute."

"Maybe," I suggested, "you made your mistake in translating from Olmayan measurements to miles."

He shook his head. "I doubt it," he said.

"How were the distances measured in the first place?"

"Well, until we had the Stardrive and could actually get close to some of these suns we used ordinary methods—you know, spectroscopic analysis of light and so on. But after the 'Age of Interstellar Flight' the errors were corrected by direct instrument readings."

"How are the instruments calibrated? In miles, kilometers, or what?"

"The basic unit," he said pedantically, "is the 'ecapalim,' an Olma-

yan word corresponding to our mile, actually about a mile and five sixteenths. But because of the immense distances, instruments on space-ships register in 'toncapalm,' or units of about one hundred and sixty thousand miles." He thought awhile, then, "Here, let me see if it's just an error in translating to miles." He worked rapidly and soon covered the back of the map with numbers. I watched him closely meanwhile, admiring his mathematical facility but noting carefully his growing tension. Finally, with a grunt of disgust, he tossed his pencil on the desk and paced the room restlessly.

"That's not it," he said. "There's something fundamentally wrong."

"Well," I comforted, "it's not very serious, after all. . . ."

"Not serious!" he exploded, turning to me with anger flaring in his eyes and his face drawn into a tight mask of contempt. "Not serious! Why, man, these maps are used by my pilots. No wonder I've lost so many ships!"

"Have you lost very many?" I asked innocently.

He passed a trembling hand over his face and muttered some words I couldn't hear. Then he returned to his chair and collapsed on it like a discarded marionette. I, watching intently, felt a thrill of triumph as I realized what this episode had produced: the first small aperture in the fantasy, the first puncture in the magnificent pretense. Careful to control the eagerness in my voice, I repeated the question. "Have you really lost many ships?"

"I . . . I don't know," he faltered. "I'll have to check on it when I go back."

We sat in silence again, each of us busy with strange thoughts. I had the almost telepathic impression that Kirk's mind was a turmoil of questions about me. Heretofore, he had merely accepted my acceptance of the fantasy. Now, with his own faith in it slightly shaken and mine apparently unruffled, he was perplexed. Perceiving this, I quickly followed up my advantage.

I picked up the maps and charts from the desk and examined them closely, holding them directly under the desk light and turning each one over as if looking for something. I felt his attention was aroused sufficiently, I asked, "You don't happen to remember when you made these, do you?"

"No," Kirk replied. "Why?"

Well, it occurred to me you might have marked a date on them. It would have helped."

"How?"

"It's just an idea," I said casually. "I thought if they were dated you could find out when you examined the originals at the Institute."

"What good would that do?"

"Probably none," I said, "except that it's possible these maps

are based on information obtained before the 'Age of Interstellar Flight' That may be what's wrong. If you knew the dates of your visits to the Institute you could ask to be shown the stuff you saw then—I'm sure in a place like that they'd have a record of what you looked at."

His eyes brightened and his body tensed with alertness "You mean," he said, "that maybe these maps are based on old ones and my pilots are using corrected charts?"

"Sure," I said "After all, if you'd been losing many ships, you'd have heard about it long before this and the matter would have been investigated But you just said you don't know how many vessels have been lost—which is rather odd, isn't it? So I'd suspect these are based on old stuff and your pilots have more up-to-date charts. I doubt if you'll find you've been losing ships at more than a normal rate, at least at a rate you can account for by the usual dangers of interstellar flight."

"That's easy to check on," Kirk said brightly.

"Of course," I agreed "When you go back, get in touch with the Institute I think you'll clear up this mystery in short order."

I rose to signal the end of our hour As Kirk was about to depart he paused in the doorway, from where his eyes swept over me in a long, slow quizzical gaze I knew then that I had, indeed, forced a slight crack in the apparently unassailable fantasy. I knew that my participation in it, the evidence I had just given of total acceptance—even of conspiracy to the extent of helping him sustain his defense when it was threatened—had, for the first time, made him question it. And on the following day, when he announced that during the night he had journeyed to Srom Olma to visit the Institute there and had found, as I predicted, that his maps were based on "calculations made before the Age of Flight," a new note was to be detected in his voice It was, I thought, a hesitant note, lacking the old deliberateness and assurance, betraying a lessening of conviction or, perhaps, faith. Evidence that my impression was correct accumulated during subsequent days. Despite my urging, Kirk never got around to preparing new star maps. Although he declared his intention to do so, and agreed with me that the job had to be done for the sake of maintaining the completeness and correctness of the "records," he let the matter slide, putting it off with one lame excuse after another until it faded from his thoughts.

This incident reflects the pattern of my operational methods with Kirk following the decision to participate in his psychosis. While it was crucial, it is merely one of many such episodes, each of which contributed a little more leverage for prying my patient out of his madness. How it and others like it worked is probably obvious to the discerning reader. In nontechnical terms, one of the principles on

which the whole performance is based can be described simply by reference to a commonplace: it is impossible for two objects to occupy the same place at the time. It is as if a delusion such as Kirk's has room in it only for one person at one time, as if a psychotic structure, too, is rigidly circumscribed as to "living space." When, as in this case, another person invades the delusion, the original occupant finds himself literally forced to give away.

This fantastic situation can also be represented by imagining an encounter between two victims of, let us say, the Napoleonic delusion. The conviction of each that he is the real Napoleon must be called into question by the presence of the other, and it is not unusual for one to surrender, in whole or in part, when such a confrontation occurs. Some years ago I observed exactly this while on the staff of a psychiatric sanitarium in Maryland. At that time we had a middle-aged paranoid woman who clung to the delusion that she was Mary, Mother of God. It happened that we admitted another patient with the same delusion some months after the first had been received. Both were rather mild-mannered people, both Catholics, both from a similar socio-economic level. On the lawn one day, happily in the presence of another staff member and myself, the two deluded women met and began to exchange confidences. Before long each revealed to the other her "secret" identity. What followed was most instructive. The first, our "oldest" patient, received the information with visible perturbation and an immediate reaction of startle. "Why you can't be, my dear," she said. "You must be crazy. *I am the Mother of God*." The new patient regarded her companion sorrowfully and, in a voice resonant with pity, said, "I'm afraid it's you who are mixed up, *I am Mary*." There followed a brief but polite argument which I was restrained from interfering with by my older and more experienced colleague, who bade me merely to listen and observe. After a while the argument ceased, and there followed a long silence during which the antagonists inspected each other warily. Finally, the "older" patient beckoned to the doctor standing with me.

"Dr. S.," she asked, "what was the name of Our Blessed Mary's Mother?"

"I think it was Anne," he replied.

At once this patient turned to the other, her face glowing and her eyes shining. "If you're Mary," she declared, "*I must be Anne, your mother*." And the two women embraced.

As a postscript to this story, it should be recorded that the woman who surrendered her Mother of God delusion thereafter responded rapidly to treatment and was soon discharged.

Participation serves another purpose which should not be overlooked. To paraphrase the astute Dr. John N. Rosen, when the therapist engages in the same behavior as the patient—and expresses the

same ideas in the same language—the patient's own image and activities are projected before him as on a screen. He is thus, in one bold maneuver, thrust to the side of reality, forced to take up a critical position vis-à-vis what he observes, i.e. his own behavior, and compelled to adopt an attitude. This attitude is soon transformed into a therapeutic tool with which the clinician now refashions the psychic structure.

All three of these principles of "participation therapy"—and others that need not occupy us here—operated on Kirk. My direct involvement in the fantasy that had, until then, been his private preserve, constricted his "*lebensraum*," confronted him with his mirror image, and maneuvered him into the critical reality position. As a consequence, slowly but surely, he was being edged out of his psychosis.

But, meanwhile, strange things were happening to me, his psychoanalyst (or, better, his psychotherapist, since the method I was employing was no longer strictly that of psychoanalysis), and it is to these unforeseen personal effects—because they are, at least in retrospect, amusing and instructive—that I now wish to turn.

Kirk's case fascinated me from the very beginning. Like any other profession the practice of psychoanalysis has its share of drawbacks and dissatisfactions. While the adventure through the human mind is more often than not exciting, and for a person like myself no other conceivable occupation could be as intellectually and emotionally rewarding, nevertheless there are long plateaus of dullness, of routine, that tend to arouse all-too-human discontents. I have often thought that these occasional limbolike periods, when daily journeys through the unconscious seem so tame—appearing less like explorations through dangerous, trackless jungles and more like commuting on a suburban trolley—I have often thought these periods would be more tolerable were it not for the additional occupational discomforts of satiation and confinement.

In his work, moment after moment, an analyst lives intimately with the human passions. Lust, greed, envy, hate—the seven deadly sins and more; love, charity, faith—the heavenly virtues and all the beatitudes; these assail him endlessly. While he is not to be caught up in the emotional tempest that storms about him unremittingly, it is in such an atmosphere that he must exist. One consequence of this incessant exposure must be satiety, a feeling of fullness, of overripeness, the defense against which is the antagonistic feeling of monotony. Only a "surprise," only a sudden, unpredictable event, can restore to the analyst who has reached the satiation point that quickening of interest, of zest, necessary to refresh his senses and render him once more sensitive in the way he must be if he is to perform efficiently. Fortunately, such "surprises" are not lacking.

By confinement, I refer to the actual physical fact of enforced immobility that is the condition of work for people such as I. Everything we do takes place in the consulting room. Activity, movement, is denied to us. The great dramas of which we partake, the tremendous conflicts, the shattering experiences—these come to us, come to the rooms in which we sit and listen. Eternally, we are spectators—rather, auditors. Sometimes, it cannot be denied, one chafes against the sheer physical constriction of such a life, one longs for movement; one becomes physically restless, hungering for the air of the outdoors, for the vigorous employment of the limbs and for the distant use of eyes against horizons rather than walls. Finally, one tires of words, words, words. The long vacations habitual with analysts are one antidote, and it is to be observed how they drift to the mountains and the sea in an annual effort to feed their appetites for mobility and space.

I write about these conditions of psychoanalytic practice to explain something of the mood I was in when I made the decision to participate in Kirk's psychosis, and to account for what happened to me when I did. At that time I was in a period of emotional satiation, bored with my work, which seemed to me to be offering fewer and fewer satisfactions. I had not then the wit to comprehend that my boredom was a defense against unresolved personal conflicts, that I was drawing a defensive cloak about myself—better, placing a screen between myself and the emotional turmoil of my patients—in order to protect me from constant emotional stimulation. Moreover, I was then also restless in a physical way. Always a rather vigorous person who would rather run than walk, and provided with a body designed for activity, I contemplated the slow but progressive degeneration of flesh and muscle with angry disgust. The long hours of sitting, the stale air, the flabbiness of arms and legs, the pallid skin tones, the first suggestion of potty bulge beneath the waistline—against these and many other minor but telling symptoms of oncoming physical decrepitude I felt helpless and self-rejecting, blaming them, for want of more insight, on the implausible profession I had chosen to follow.

Yet these two contributory factors to my mood when the affair of Kirk took its unforeseen twist do not, by themselves, even begin to explain what transpired. Among others that account for my vulnerability, beyond a transient mood, there has to be mentioned my fondness for fantasy, my taste for science fiction, and certain temperamental qualities that contribute to the making of my personality.

I have always been given to an active fantasy life, to the weaving of pleasing imaginative interior romances. Without being too biographical, I can reveal that the roots of this tendency are to be discovered in a solitude during childhood comparable but not similar to Kirk's; more psychological, that is, than actual. Nor was my fantasizing at all like Kirk's—obsessional, violent, and complex—but



rather of the common Walter Mitty type. As a child and adolescent it offered gratifications withheld by the tedious reality of school, lessons and middle-class family life. As an adult it provided—and still does—those harmless outlets for life's ordinary frustrations that take from events their sting and that can, if employed properly, be creative. I have always delighted in this capacity for fantasizing and have tried to bend it to my uses. Until the episode with Kirk, however, I had no idea what a double-edged tool it could be.

As for my taste for science fiction, I can only say that I have been, since learning to read, an *aficionado* of the genre. Introduced to *Amazing Stories* by a schoolmate, I rapidly acquired an insatiable appetite for the stuff, to the despair of my parents who regarded the dog-eared pulps that overflowed our bookshelves with the kind of despair with which today's parents view a similar litter of comic books. Fortunately, my literary aspirations and tastes soon directed me toward authors representing the higher reaches of the art, and my passage from BEM's through Burroughs to Wells, Heard and Stapledon was swift. At forty I remain a rather reluctant addict, fighting the temptations of Van Vogt, Bradbury, and Co., but succumbing blissfully to the irresistible appeal of a new Orwell (alas! there will be no more from him), a Wylie, or a Huxley. Parenthetically, I owe to science fiction much more than gratitude for entertainment. Reinforcing a native curiosity and an inclination toward science, such reading has led me toward the serious study of subjects like Semantics and Cybernetics, to say nothing of laying a foundation for intellectual hobbies like philosophy, higher mathematics and astrophysics.

Emotionally satiated, restive under confinement, given anyhow to the uses of imagination, and a devotee of science fiction to begin with—these are the obvious factors that entered into the interesting personal experiences I underwent in the closing phase of Kirk Allen's therapy. For, as the reader has anticipated, I, the therapist, became quite involved in the psychosis of my patient and for a time and to some degree shared his obsession.

From the moment I made its acquaintance Kirk's case, as I have said, fascinated me. The dictionary meaning of the word "fascinate" describes my state and tells the story better than I can: it means "to bewitch, to enchant, to cast a spell over, etc." This definition applies to the psychological state I soon found myself in when, as my participation in the grandiose delusion increased through the deliberate efforts I have described, the sharply defined edges of reality began to fade and I entered part way into the incredible universe of Kirk's design.

In the beginning it was a game. My wholesale acceptance of the fantasy was no more than a pretense, a device I had seized upon that promised to pry loose a disturbed mind from its adhesive clutch on a

foundering life raft. But eventually it ceased to be a game, and the moves, the maneuvers, the manipulations of the pieces, passed from the hands of this player to become the tools of forces of which he was then hardly aware.

That this could have happened to me I attribute to more than the precipitating factors I have already mentioned. Beyond these, it cannot be denied that other intimate temperamental characteristics played their parts. Among them, I have only to mention two I have always known to be determinants of my personality and motivants of my behavior.

There is first to be considered that I was intrigued by the prospect Kirk's fantasy presented for the realization of my dearest wish the wish to have sufficient time to know, to do, and to be all the wonderful things denied me and all men by temporal limitations. I possess a curiosity beyond the average, an appetite for knowing and experiencing that is almost boundless. My life does not provide sufficient scope for the satisfaction of this hunger, but the intricate fabrication woven by my patient did. And in this sense it was enticing. By engaging in it, I could obtain the illusion of gratifying this immense curiosity and appeasing the chronic thirst of my seeking mind. With but a small step of an already lively imagination, I could escape from the prison of time: I could *be* geologist, explorer, astronomer, historian, physicist, adventurer and all these other enviable beings whose roles I had, at one time or another, played in my own pallid fantasies and whose knowledge I have always wanted to possess. This was a potent allure.

Then there is another charm that Kirk's extramundane delusion held for me. To an ego that has more than a modest share of a need to assert itself in creative ways, the opportunities afforded by this unique situation were tempting. While the position of "Lord of a Planet" had already been preempted, my peculiar function once I had forced my way into Kirk's romantic creation gave free play to every inventive whim, every inspiration, every demiurgic notion I ever hope to have. For as the power-behind-the-throne, the prime mover of a universe unhampered by realistic restrictions, the possibilities to exercise creativity on a grand scale were inviting beyond description.

In view of such predisposing and precipitating factors I do not find it remarkable that my engagement as a participant in Kirk's psychosis disturbed somewhat that mental equilibrium on which I have always prided myself and brought me within sight of psychological distress. We all of us possess areas of lessened resistance, and somewhere on the psychic armor of the strongest there is a vulnerable place. In this case it happened that the materials of Kirk's psychosis and the Achilles heel of my personality met and meshed like the gears of a clock.

The early signs that I had fallen under the spell of Kirk's Utopian

vision and was succumbing to it were innocuous enough and hardly such as to cause concern. They consisted, by and large, of an increased interest in the details of the fantasy and a mild but persistent anxiousness about them. Unlike before, however, this interest and anxiety were not for the sake of the therapy so much as in the service of the fantasy itself. I continued my intense pursuit of error and inconsistency in the "records," but now with the obsessive aim of "setting them straight," of "getting the facts." When I discovered mistakes, where before I would employ them solely for purposes of treatment, in this phase I gave first consideration to their correction. Nor did I, on finding them, experience the thrill of satisfaction I had felt formerly when the unearthing of error meant more ammunition in the fight against my patient's psychosis. Instead, such faults aroused anxiety in *me*, made *me* uncomfortable, and created moderately distressful symptoms which could be relieved only when the correction was made.

There were occasions, moreover, when a problem about the "records" could not be settled in discussions with Kirk. When this happened, I seemed to be compelled by rising anxiety to work out a solution of my own. Soon I found myself devoting spare time to calculations and speculations designed to "solve" what perplexed or bothered me. When I managed such a solution, the relief it afforded was intense. No less intense was the pleasure I took in Kirk's liberal congratulations when I presented the explanation to him as a triumph of *my* ingenuity. Often, too, when neither discussion with Kirk nor the efforts I made on my own sufficed to clarify some point, I found it "necessary" for him to obtain the required information by "journeying" to the place where it could be discovered. On occasions of this kind, assigning him the role of cosmic errand boy, I actually ordered Kirk to make these excursions into the fantasy, then discovered myself awaiting his "return" with extraordinary eagerness.

At this point I find it necessary to assure the reader that, despite the foregoing, I was not myself psychotic either during the phase I had been describing or later when these strange manifestations increased in quantity and quality. My condition throughout was, rather, that of enchantment developing toward obsession. I never lost sight of the fact that the "trips" Kirk made into a far future to a remote, nonexistent galaxy were impossible. But, in my preoccupation with the fantasy as such, I found it convenient to overlook, so far as *I* was concerned, the manner in which its wonderful details were made available to me. This is to say, I omitted from my concerns *how* Kirk collected "facts" and attended only to the "facts" themselves. That he employed the implausible vehicle of "teleportation" or some equally incredible and psychotic means to do what was required of him, I simply overlooked in my enthusiasm for the elaborate conceit.

As the days passed, however, the symptoms I have been writing

about increased in number and intensity. They were all of an obsessional nature and, as such disturbances tend to do, they began to invade my thought and behavior to an ever greater degree. Whereas the fantasy and its delights had previously beckoned only when I was actually with Kirk or in spare time, it now intruded itself into moments when I was not fully engaged otherwise, and even, on occasion, when I was attending to affairs far removed from Kirk and his delusion. I found myself, for example, translating certain words, terms and names into the "Olmayan" language. Phrases in this wierd tongue, unannounced and unbidden, often came into my thoughts and remained there to plague consciousness annoyingly like a haunting melody until I set them down on paper and transposed them to English. At a startlingly rapid rate, it seems, larger and larger areas of my mind were being taken over by the fantasy.

I have since questioned those who share my life to find out if, at the time of which I am writing, I betrayed in any way that I was prepossessed by a growing obsession. Apparently there was no change in my deportment, either toward them or in my work, for the state to which I am confessing here entirely escaped their notice. How this could have been I fail to understand, for I retain the impression of this as a time when happenings in the real world, events that would ordinarily have stimulated me, lost their appeal—of a time when I was abstracted and engrossed. The truth is that the state of calm I maintained outwardly was a false front behind which, uncannily, I was living the most exciting kind of life. With Kirk's puzzled assistance I was taking part in cosmic adventures, sharing the exhilaration of the sweeping extravaganza he had plotted.

When I recall this period now, it becomes obvious to me how I employed the rationalization of clinical altruism for personal ends and thus fell into a trap that awaits all unwary therapists of the mind. I remember clearly how, in those interim moments when I paused to ask myself what I was doing or to question the validity of my thoughts and feelings, I deliberately dismissed the evidence that I was succumbing to a fascination that could be fatal by referring my behavior to the therapeutic gambit necessitated by my patient's disorder. Today I cannot deny the fact that, in my psychic condition at the time, certain elements in the fantasy—some of which I have written about—appealed to me powerfully precisely because they fulfilled long dormant needs and desires. Then, however, because I was unaware of the strength of these desires, I fell prey to the mechanism of self-deception which was activated by the coincidental circumstance that Kirk's psychosis demanded exactly the kind of treatment I was offering.

Armed, then, with the rationalization I have described, during this brief but acute period I skirted the edges of the abyss. Although

aware of the dangerous game I was playing, I seem to have been willing to play it to the limit for stakes of then unknown neurotic satisfaction. Like a swimmer who has made a wager with himself to test his endurance, it was as if I were determined to see how far I could go in order to try some unconscious conclusion with fate. Thus the game, at the height of my distraction, threatened to become a deadly one, a contest between dark forces of the mind that invited total surrender and the energies of a consciousness determined to maintain its integrity. This latter part of my mind remained, throughout, clear and analytically functional. Not only instinct with self-preservation, but experienced beyond most minds in such matters, it perceived the hazards. On it my destiny depended, for against the fascination of the fantasy that occupied the nether geography of that same mind it battled valiantly and, as it turned out, successfully.

There arrived a moment when I could not ignore the telltale signs of obsession, a moment when the ego realized the threat and allied itself with the forces of light. This crucial time was signalized by acute psychic distress, by an exacerbation of my symptoms to the point where they became painful. It was the pain, then, that informed me of the real peril I was courting and energized the machinery of self-preservation.

To describe what happened would necessitate presenting a clinical picture of the germinal stages of the obsessional state. Since this is hardly the place for such a description, let it suffice to say that, with the passage of time, all the manifestations of obsession I have mentioned intensified. The anxiety, for example, could no longer be passed off as inner excitement: it rose to a pitch of aching apprehension where it demanded recognition. To meet this rising tide, the obsessional demands increased and, in turn, the compulsive requirements from thought and action became more exacting. Finally, the amount of my preoccupation with the fantasy, the time I had to spend on its details and the efforts I was forced to expend for its sake, enlarged to a point where other areas of my existence were invaded.

The transformation of fascination into psychic distress alarmed me sufficiently to take the necessary steps for extricating myself from this weird predicament. It acted, first, as a spur to self-analysis. Gradually, by the use of this accustomed tool, I was able to allay the more acute symptoms I have recorded and to initiate those insightful processes that lead to recovery from psychological disorder. But before I had completed this task, there occurred an amazing event which, in the space of one brief hour, not only broke what remained of the spell I was under, but marked the successful conclusion of Kirk's treatment. For it chanced that Kirk and I reversed roles and, in one of those startling denouements that make my work the unpredictable, wonderful and rewarding pursuit it is, the folly we shared collapsed.

The scene was the same. my office, high above the noisy streets of Baltimore Outside there was a flurry of snow that melted as the flakes touched a surface. Through its soft screen the monument at Mt. Vernon Place and, beyond, the busy harbor, had the charm of an old print. Inside it was warm and quiet. Because of the grayness of the day, all the lamps were lit and soft shadows made subdued geometric patterns on the cocoa-colored walls. At the desk, I sat, preparing for my session with Kirk by studying some drawings he had made. From the next room I could hear my secretary at her typewriter. Suddenly, to the accompaniment of a pleasant tinkle of chimes, the door to the hallway opened and I knew that Kirk had arrived for his hour. I was eager to see him, for on the previous day I had sent him on a "mission" and had since been awaiting his report. After an interval, I pressed the buzzer to signal him in.

Kirk entered and took his accustomed place in the chair by my desk. We grunted our usual greetings; then, without preliminary, urged by now familiar tensions, I began

"Did you get the information?" I asked.

He nodded, and from his pocket took a leather-bound notebook which he opened and placed on the desk. Quickly I thumbed through the pages, observing with a swift sense of satisfaction that each contained a drawing and some penciled notes in Kirk's handwriting. Then I went back to the first page, extracted it from the binding, and set it beside a sketch I had already taken from the pile at my elbow. Disregarding Kirk, I gave my attention to the two papers. So absolute was my absorption in comparing the sheets and making notes that I failed to notice when Kirk left his chair and stood by the window. When I finally turned to him, intending to make some comment, I observed how he was staring down at me with an expression of concern.

"Something wrong?" I asked.

"No," he replied. "Nothing's wrong."

"Then why are you standing there? Don't you want to work on this with me?"

"Not especially."

"How come?"

He shrugged "I don't know. . . Just tired, I guess"

"That's odd," I commented. "This material on Olmayan ethnic types is particularly interesting. . . Don't you find it so?"

Again he shrugged, but this time he resumed his seat.

For the next quarter hour we "worked" together; I with lively absorption, he in a desultory fashion which did not escape my notice. The situation was most unusual, for I was accustomed to much more participation from him. This morning his "heart" was not in

what we were doing. He answered my questions in a dispirited way, and when I raised a point for discussion his voice and manner lacked the enthusiasm I had come to expect from him. I could not ignore the strangeness of his manner when, finally, he again left his chair and began to pace the room.

"Kirk," I said, pushing aside the litter on the desk and lighting a cigarette, "what's wrong? What's eating you this morning?"

"Nothing," he said. "Nothing at all."

"Then why are you so . . . restless?"

"Oh, it's just . . ." and his voice trailed off while his arms described a gesture of weary despair.

"Just what?" I urged.

"Well . . . it's just that I've got something to tell you—and I can't seem to get it out."

"Something you haven't told me?"

He nodded.

"Something about yourself, or the work?"

"About both, I guess."

"Well," I said, "after all this time I shouldn't think you'd have any trouble telling me what's on your mind."

"I don't . . . usually. But this is different."

"Tell me anyhow," I urged.

Opposite the desk, he stopped and fixed me with anxious eyes.

"All right," he said. "I'll tell you—but you're not going to like it . . ." Then, "I've been lying to you."

"Lying to me? What about?"

He leaned across and picked up the note book. "About this," he said, "and this," indicating the papers on the desk, "and all the stuff I've been giving you these last few weeks. It's all a lie, all of it. I've been making it up . . . inventing all that—that—nonsense!"

I tried not to show what I was feeling, to hide the mixture of emotions that surged through me—the disappointment and the triumph, the concern and the relief. With fingers I knew were trembling, I slowly crushed my cigarette.

"You've been making it all up?" I asked.

"Yes. All of it."

"It's all false?" I asked again.

"All false!"

"Even the . . . trips?"

"Trips!" he snorted. "What trips? Why it's been weeks since I gave up that foolishness. . . ."

"But you've been telling me—"

He seated himself on the edge of his chair, his whole body rigid and his face tight with tension. "I know what I've been telling you,"

he said earnestly "But, believe me, I've been pretending for a long time. There've been no trips I saw through all of that stuff—weeks ago. . . ."

"What do you mean—you saw through?"

"Just what I said. I realized I was crazy. I realized I've been deluding myself for years, that there never have been any 'trips,' that it was all just—just insanity."

"Then why," I asked, "why did you pretend? Why did you keep on telling me . . .?"

"Because I felt I had to," he said. "Because I felt *you wanted me to!*"

The last words echoed and re-echoed in the silent room. For many minutes I seemed to hear them. Then they faded, to be replaced by the normal sounds of the morning—the asthmatic hum of the elevator, the tapping of a typewriter, the closing of a door down the hall, and the honking of horns from the street nine stories below.

I rose and walked to my chair behind the couch. There I seated myself and indicated to Kirk that he should lie down. When he had settled himself on it, I said, "Tell me about it Kirk"

. . . It had not been a sudden thing, this abandonment by Kirk of his psychosis, but the result of a dawning understanding that he had begun to develop from the moment he became aware I was sharing—or at least appeared to share—his delusion. From that time forward it had somehow lost its potency, and the gratifications it gave him lacked their former charge of excitement. With this reduction in the appeal of the fantasy, moreover, the insights gained but not employed during the long months of our dynamic exploration of the past at last came into their own. Kirk's former ability to enter the fantasy, to achieve that abnormal state of sensitivity to his needs that had catapulted him into his mythical universe, began to diminish. It was not long before the whole amazing defense—for such Kirk now recognized his obsession to be—collapsed or, better, decayed, to be replaced, item for item, by reality.

But in these latter weeks, although discovering himself each day to be more free of the abiding delusion, Kirk, so he now told me, was still obliged to concern himself with it for the strangest of reasons. Incomprehensible though it may seem, he felt it necessary to engage in a pretense *for my sake*. My enchantment with the fantasy, my preoccupation with its details, my literal involvement in it as a sharer of its exciting gratifications—these not only puzzled him with the recovery of his reasoning capacity and the extension of his hard-won grasp on reality—they created, in addition, a real dilemma. For while *he* no longer believed in the fantasy, he thought *I* did, and such was the nature of his friendly concern for me, and his devotion, that he could not bring himself to disclose his lack of faith lest he some-



how "hurt" me. His position, incredibly, was similar to mine when I made the decision to participate in the grandiose obsession, but with this difference: his inability to "hurt" me was a purely emotional reaction, while my decision to employ a technical variant came from professional appreciation of a delicate psychological situation.

Moreover, Kirk was not able to appreciate the fact that when he abandoned his psychosis he had achieved my sole object for him, that to wean him from madness had been the conscious aim of my actions, and that this alone was important to me. As he saw and felt it, there had been a complete turnabout in our positions, a turnabout that confused and worried him, and one before which he remained helpless. As the reader now knows, it was not because I was such an excellent actor that Kirk believed so thoroughly in the apparent reversal of roles: it was, rather, that he sensed how I had been attracted by the stupendous fantasy and felt, in myself, its magnetic pull. . . .

Until Kirk Allen came into my life I had never doubted my own stability. The aberrations of mind, so I had always thought, were for others. Tolerant, somewhat amused, indulgent, I held to the myth of my own mental impregnability. Superior in the knowledge that I, at least, was completely sane and could not—no matter what—be shaken from my sanity, I tended to regard the foibles of my fellows, their fears, their perplexities, with what I know now to have been contempt.

I am shamed by this smugness. But now, as I listen from my chair behind the couch, I know better. I know that my chair and the couch are separated only by a thin line. I know that it is, after all, but a happier combination of accidents that determines, finally, who shall lie on that couch, and who shall sit behind it.

It has been years since I saw Kirk Allen, but I think of him often, and of the days when we roved the galaxies together. Especially do I recall Kirk on summer nights on Long Island, when the sky over Peconic Bay is bright with quivering stars. And sometimes, as I gaze above, I smile to myself and whisper:

"How goes it with the Crystopeds?"

"How are things in Seraneb?"

# CRAZY SUNDAY

F. SCOTT FITZGERALD



It was Sunday—not a day, but rather a gap between two other days. Behind, for all of them, lay sets and sequences, the long waits under the crane that swung the microphone, the hundred miles a day by automobiles to and fro across a county, the struggles of rival ingenuities in the conference rooms, the ceaseless compromise, the clash and strain of many personalities fighting for their lives. And now Sunday, with individual life starting up again, with a glow kindling in eyes that had been glazed with monotony the afternoon before. Slowly as the hours waned they came awake like “Puppenfeen” in a toy shop. an intense colloquy in a corner, lovers disappearing to neck in a hall. And the feeling of “Hurry, it’s not too late, but for God’s sake hurry before the blessed forty hours of leisure are over”

Joel Coles was writing continuity. He was twenty-eight and not yet broken by Hollywood. He had had what were considered nice assignments since his arrival six months before and he submitted his scenes and sequences with enthusiasm. He referred to himself modestly as a hack but really did not think of it that way. His mother had been a successful actress, Joel had spent his childhood between London and New York trying to separate the real from the unreal, or at least to keep one guess ahead. He was a handsome man with the pleasant cow-brown eyes that in 1913 had gazed out at Broadway audiences from his mother’s face.

When the invitation came it made him sure that he was getting somewhere. Ordinarily he did not go out on Sundays but stayed

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sober and took work home with him. Recently they had given him a Eugene O'Neill play destined for a very important lady indeed. Everything he had done so far had pleased Miles Calman, and Miles Calman was the only director on the lot who did not work under a supervisor and was responsible to the money men alone. Everything was clicking into place in Joel's career ("This is Mr. Calman's secretary Will you come to tea from four to six Sunday—he lives in Beverly Hills, number —.")

Joel was flattered. It would be a party out of the top-drawer. It was a tribute to himself as a young man of promise. The Marion Davies' crowd, the high-hats, the big currency numbers, perhaps even Dietrich and Garbo and the Marquise, people who were not seen anywhere, would probably be at Calman's.

"I won't take anything to drink," he assured himself. Calman was audibly tired of rummies, and thought it was a pity the industry could not get along without them.

Joel agreed that writers drank too much—he did himself, but he wouldn't this afternoon. He wished Miles would be within hearing when the cocktails were passed to hear his succinct, unobtrusive, "No, thank you."

Miles Calman's house was built for great emotional moments—there was an air of listening, as if the far silences of its vistas hid an audience, but this afternoon it was thronged, as though people had been bidden rather than asked. Joel noted with pride that only two other writers from the studio were in the crowd, an ennobled limey and, somewhat to his surprise, Nat Keogh, who had evoked Calman's impatient comment on drunks.

Stella Calman (Stella Walker, of course) did not move on to her other guests after she spoke to Joel. She lingered—she looked at him with the sort of beautiful look that demands some sort of acknowledgment and Joel drew quickly on the dramatic adequacy inherited from his mother.

"Well, you look about sixteen! Where's your kiddy car?"

She was visibly pleased; she lingered. He felt that he should say something more, something confident and easy—he had first met her when she was struggling for bits in New York. At the moment a tray slid up and Stella put a cocktail glass into his hand.

"Everybody's afraid, aren't they?" he said, looking at it absently. "Everybody watches for everybody else's blunders, or tries to make sure they're with people that'll do them credit. Of course that's not true in your house," he covered himself hastily. "I just meant generally in Hollywood."

Stella agreed. She presented several people to Joel as if he were important. Reassuring himself that Miles was at the other side of the room, Joel drank the cocktail.

"So you have a baby?" he said "That's the time to look out After a pretty woman has had her first child, she's very vulnerable, because she wants to be reassured about her own charm. She's got to have some new man's unqualified devotion to prove to herself she hasn't lost anything."

"I never get anybody's unqualified devotion," Stella said rather resentfully.

"They're afraid of your husband"

"You think that's it?" She wrinkled her brow over the idea; then the conversation was interrupted at the exact moment Joel would have chosen.

Her attentions had given him confidence. Not for him to join safe groups, to slink to refuge under the wings of such acquaintances as he saw about the room He walked to the window and looked out toward the Pacific, colorless under its sluggish sunset It was good here—the American Riviera and all that, if there were ever time to enjoy it The handsome, well-dressed people in the room, the lovely girls, and the—well, the lovely girls You couldn't have everything.

He saw Stella's fresh boyish face, with the tired eyelid that always drooped a little over one eye, moving about among her guests and he wanted to sit with her and talk a long time as if she were a girl instead of a name, he followed her to see if she paid anyone as much attention as she had paid him. He took another cocktail—not because he needed confidence but because she had given him so much of it Then he sat down beside the director's mother.

"Your son's gotten to be a legend, Mrs. Calman—Oracle and a Man of Destiny and all that. Personally, I'm against him but I'm in a minority. What do you think of him? Are you impressed? Are you surprised how far he's gone?"

"No, I'm not surprised," she said calmly. "We always expected a lot from Miles."

"Well now, that's unusual," remarked Joel. "I always think all mothers are like Napoleon's mother. My mother didn't want me to have anything to do with the entertainment business. She wanted me to go to West Point and be safe."

"We always had every confidence in Miles"

He stood by the built-in bar of the dining room with the good-humored, heavy-drinking, highly paid Nat Keogh.

"—I made a hundred grand during the year and lost forty grand gambling, so now I've hired a manager."

"You mean an agent," suggested Joel.

"No, I've got that too I mean a manager. I make over everything to my wife and then he and my wife get together and hand me out the money. I pay him five thousand a year to hand me out my money."

"You mean your agent"

"No, I mean my manager, and I'm not the only one—a lot of other irresponsible people have him."

"Well, if you're irresponsible why are you responsible enough to hire a manager?"

"I'm just irresponsible about gambling. Look here—"

A singer performed; Joel and Nat went forward with the others to listen.

## II

The singing reached Joel vaguely, he felt happy and friendly toward all the people gathered there, people of bravery and industry, superior to a bourgeoisie that outdid them in ignorance and loose living, risen to a position of the highest prominence in a nation that for a decade had wanted only to be entertained. He liked them—he loved them. Great waves of good feeling flowed through him.

As the singer finished his number and there was a drift toward the hostess to say good-by, Joel had an idea. He would give them "Building It Up," his own composition. It was his only parlor trick, it had amused several parties and it might please Stella Walker. Possessed by the hunch, his blood throbbing with the scarlet corpuscles of exhibitionism, he sought her.

"Of course," she cried. "Please! Do you need anything?"

"Someone has to be the secretary that I'm supposed to be dictating to."

"I'll be her."

As the word spread the guests in the hall, already putting on their coats to leave, drifted back and Joel faced the eyes of many strangers. He had a dim foreboding, realizing that the man who had just performed was a famous radio entertainer. Then someone said "Sh!" and he was alone with Stella, the center of a sinister Indian-like half-circle. Stella smiled up at him expectantly—he began.

His burlesque was based upon the cultural limitations of Mr. Dave Silverstein, an independent producer; Silverstein was presumed to be dictating a letter outlining a treatment of a story he had bought.

"—a story of divorce, the younger generators and the Foreign Legion," he heard his voice saying, with intonations of Mr. Silverstein. "But we got to build it up, see?"

A sharp pang of doubt struck through him. The faces surrounding him in the gently molded light were intent and curious, but there was no ghost of a smile anywhere; directly in front the Great Lover of the screen glared at him with an eye as keen as the eye of a potato. Only Stella Walker looked up at him with a radiant, never faltering smile.

"If we make him a Menjou type, then we get a sort of Michael Arlen only with a Honolulu atmosphere."

Still not a ripple in front, but in the rear a rustling, a perceptible shift toward the left, toward the front door.

"—then she says she feels the sex appil for him and he burns out and says 'Oh go on destroy yourself'—"

At some point he heard Nat Keogh snucker and here and there were a few encouraging faces, but as he finished he had the sickening realization that he had made a fool of himself in view of an important section of the picture world, upon whose favor depended his career.

For a moment he existed in the midst of a confused silence, broken by a general trek for the door. He felt the undercurrent of derision that rolled through the gossip, then—all this was in the space of ten seconds—the Great Lover, his eye hard and empty as the eye of a needle, shouted "Boo! Boo!" voicing in an overtone what he felt was the mood of the crowd. It was the resentment of the professional toward the amateur, of the community toward the stranger, the thumbs-down of the clan.

Only Stella Walker was still standing near and thanking him as if he had been an unparalleled success, as if it hadn't occurred to her that anyone hadn't liked it. As Nat Keogh helped him into his overcoat, a great wave of self-disgust swept over him and he clung desperately to his rule of never betraying an inferior emotion until he no longer felt it.

"I was a flop," he said lightly, to Stella. "Never mind, it's a good number when appreciated. Thanks for your cooperation."

The smile did not leave her face—he bowed rather drunkenly and Nat drew him toward the door . . .

The arrival of his breakfast awakened him into a broken and ruined world. Yesterday he was himself, a point of fire against an industry, today he felt that he was pitted under an enormous disadvantage, against those faces, against individual contempt and collective sneer. Worse than that, to Miles Calman he was become one of those rummies, stripped of dignity, whom Calman regretted he was compelled to use. To Stella Walker, on whom he had forced to martyrdom to preserve the courtesy of her house—her opinion he did not dare to guess. His gastric juices ceased to flow and he set his poached eggs back on the telephone table. He wrote:

DEAR MILES You can imagine my profound self-disgust. I confess to a taint of exhibitionism, but at six o'clock in the afternoon, in broad daylight! Good God! My apologies to your wife

Yours ever,

JOEL COLES.

Joel emerged from his office on the lot only to slink like a malefactor to the tobacco store. So suspicious was his manner that one of the

studio police asked to see his admission card. He had decided to eat lunch when Nat Keogh, confident and cheerful, overtook him.

"What do you mean you're in permanent retirement? What if that Three Piece Suit did boo you?"

"Why, listen," he continued, drawing Joel into the studio restaurant. "The night of one of his premiers at Grauman's, Joe Squires kicked his tail while he was bowing to the crowd. The ham said Joe'd hear from him later but when Joe called him up at eight o'clock next day and said, 'I thought I was going to hear from you,' he hung up the phone."

The preposterous story cheered Joel, and he found a gloomy consolation in staring at the group at the next table, the sad, lovely Siamese twins, the mean dwarfs, the proud giant from the circus picture. But looking beyond at the yellow-stained faces of pretty women, their eyes all melancholy and startling with mascara, their ball gowns garish in full day, he saw a group who had been at Calman's and winced.

"Never again," he exclaimed aloud, "absolutely my last social appearance in Hollywood!"

The following morning a telegram was waiting for him at his office:

You were one of the most agreeable people at our party. Expect you at my sister June's buffet supper next Sunday.

STELLA WALKER CALMAN.

The blood rushed fast through his veins for a feverish minute. Incredulously he read the telegram over.

"Well, that's the sweetest thing I ever heard of in my life!"

### III

Crazy Sunday again. Joel slept until eleven, then he read a newspaper to catch up with the past week. He lunched in his room on trout, avocado salad and a pint of California wine. Dressing for the tea, he selected a pin-check suit, a blue shirt, a burnt orange tie. There were dark circles of fatigue under his eyes. In his secondhand car he drove to the Riviera apartments. As he was introducing himself to Stella's sister, Miles and Stella arrived in riding clothes—they had been quarrelling fiercely most of the afternoon on all the dirt roads back of Beverly Hills.

Miles Calman, tall, nervous, with a desperate humor and the unhappiest eyes Joel ever saw, was an artist from the top of his curiously shaped head to his niggerish feet. Upon these last he stood firmly—he had never made a cheap picture though he had sometimes paid

heavily for the luxury of making experimental flops. In spite of his excellent company, one could not be with him long without realizing that he was not a well man.

From the moment of their entrance Joel's day bound itself up inextricably with theirs. As he joined the group around them Stella turned away from it with an impatient little tongue click—and Miles Calman said to the man who happened to be next to him

"Go easy on Eva Goebel. There's hell to pay about her at home." Miles turned to Joel, "I'm sorry I missed you at the office yesterday. I spent the afternoon at the analyst's."

"You being psychoanalyzed?"

"I have been for months. First I went for claustrophobia, now I'm trying to get my whole life cleared up. They said it'll take over a year."

"There's nothing the matter with your life," Joel assured him.

"Oh, no? Well, Stella seems to think so. Ask anybody—they can all tell you about it," he said bitterly.

A girl perched herself on the arm of Miles' chair, Joel crossed to Stella, who stood disconsolately by the fire.

"Thank you for your telegram," he said. "It was darn sweet. I can't imagine anybody as good-looking as you are being so good-humored."

She was a little lovelier than he had ever seen her and perhaps the unstinted admiration in his eyes prompted her to unload on him—it did not take long, for she was obviously at the emotional bursting point.

"—and Miles has been carrying on this thing for two years, and I never knew. Why, she was one of my best friends, always in the house. Finally when people began to come to me, Miles had to admit it."

She sat down vehemently on the arm of Joel's chair. Her riding breeches were the color of the chair and Joel saw that the mass of her hair was made up of some strands of red gold and some of pale gold, so that it could not be dyed, and that she had on no make-up. She was that good-looking—

Still quivering with the shock of her discovery, Stella found unbearable the spectacle of a new girl hovering over Miles; she led Joel into a bedroom, and seated at either end of a big bed they went on talking. People on their way to the washroom glanced in and made wisecracks, but Stella, emptying out her story, paid no attention. After a while Miles stuck his head in the door and said, "There's no use trying to explain something to Joel in half an hour that I don't understand myself and the psychoanalyst says will take a whole year to understand."

She talked on as if Miles were not there. She loved Miles, she



said—under considerable difficulties she had always been faithful to him.

"The psychoanalyst told Miles that he had a mother complex. In his first marriage he transferred his mother complex to his wife, you see—and then his sex turned to me. But when we married the thing repeated itself—he transferred his mother complex to me and all his libido turned toward this other woman."

Joel knew that this probably wasn't gibberish—yet it sounded like gibberish. He knew Eva Goebel; she was a motherly person, older and probably wiser than Stella, who was a golden child.

Miles now suggested impatiently that Joel come back with them since Stella had so much to say, so they drove out to the mansion in Beverly Hills. Under the high ceilings the situation seemed more dignified and tragic. It was an eerie bright night with the dark very clear outside of all the windows and Stella all rose-gold raging and crying around the room. Joel did not quite believe in picture actresses' grief. They have other preoccupations—they are beautiful rose-gold figures blown full of life by writers and directors, and after hours they sit around and talk in whispers and giggle innuendoes, and the ends of many adventures flow through them.

Sometimes he pretended to listen and instead thought how well she was got up—sleek breeches with a matched set of legs in them. an Italian-colored sweater with a little high neck, and a short brown chamois coat. He couldn't decide whether she was an imitation of an English lady or an English lady was an imitation of her. She hovered somewhere between the realest of realities and the most blatant of impersonations.

"Miles is so jealous of me that he questions everything I do," she cried scornfully. "When I was in New York I wrote him that I'd been to the theatre with Eddie Baker. Miles was so jealous he phoned me ten times in one day."

"I was wild," Miles snuffed sharply, a habit he had in times of stress. "The analyst couldn't get any results for a week."

Stella shook her head despairingly. "Did you expect me just to sit in the hotel for three weeks?"

"I don't expect anything. I admit that I'm jealous. I try not to be. I worked on that with Dr. Bridgebane, but it didn't do any good. I was jealous of Joel this afternoon when you sat on the arm of his chair."

"You were?" She started up. "You were! Wasn't there somebody on the arm of your chair? And did you speak to me for two hours?"

"You were telling your troubles to Joel in the bedroom."

"When I think that that woman—she seemed to believe that to omit Eva Goebel's name would be to lessen her reality—"used to come here—"

"All right—all right," said Miles wearily. "I've admitted everything and I feel as bad about it as you do." Turning to Joel he began talking about pictures, while Stella moved restlessly along the far walls, her hands in her breeches pockets.

"They've treated Miles terribly," she said, coming suddenly back into the conversation as if they'd never discussed her personal affairs. "Dear, tell him about old Beltzer trying to change your picture."

As she stood hovering protectively over Miles, her eyes flashing with indignation in his behalf, Joel realized that he was in love with her. Stuffed with excitement he got up to say good night.

With Monday the week resumed its workaday rhythm, in sharp contrast to the theoretical discussions, the gossip and scandal of Sunday, there was the endless detail of script revision—"Instead of a lousy dissolve, we can leave her voice on the sound track and cut to a medium shot of the taxi from Bell's angle or we can simply pull the camera back to include the station, hold it a minute and then pan to the row of taxis"—by Monday afternoon Joel had again forgotten that people whose business was to provide entertainment were ever privileged to be entertained. In the evening he phoned Miles' house. He asked for Miles but Stella came to the phone.

"Do things seem better?"

"Not particularly. What are you doing next Saturday evening?"

"Nothing."

"The Perrys are giving a dinner and theatre party and Miles won't be here—he's flying to South Bend to see the Notre Dame-California game, I thought you might go with me in his place."

After a long moment Joel said, "Why—surely. If there's a conference I can't make dinner but I can get to the theatre."

"Then I'll say we can come."

Joel walked his office. In view of the strained relations of the Calmans, would Miles be pleased, or did she intend that Miles shouldn't know of it? That would be out of the question—if Miles didn't mention it Joel would. But it was an hour or more before he could get down to work again.

Wednesday there was a four-hour wrangle in a conference room crowded with planets and nebulae of cigarette smoke. Three men and a woman paced the carpet in turn, suggesting or condemning, speaking sharply or persuasively, confidently or despairingly. At the end Joel lingered to talk to Miles.

The man was tired—not with the exaltation of fatigue but life-tired, with his lids sagging and his beard prominent over the blue shadows near his mouth.

"I hear you're flying to the Notre Dame game."

Miles looked beyond him and shook his head.

"I've given up the idea."

"Why?"

"On account of you." Still he did not look at Joel.

"What the hell, Miles?"

"That's why I've given it up." He broke into a perfunctory laugh at himself "I can't tell what Stella might do just out of spite—she's invited you to take her to the Perry's, hasn't she? I wouldn't enjoy the game"

The fine instinct that moved swiftly and confidently on the set, muddled so weakly and helplessly through his personal life.

"Look, Miles," Joel said frowning "I've never made any passes whatsoever at Stella. If you're really seriously canceling your trip on account of me, I won't go to the Perrys' with her. I won't see her You can trust me absolutely"

Miles looked at him, carefully now

"Maybe" He shrugged his shoulders "Anyhow there'd just be somebody else. I wouldn't have any fun."

"You don't seem to have much confidence in Stella She told me she'd always been true to you."

"Maybe she has" In the last few minutes several more muscles had sagged around Miles' mouth, "But how can I ask anything of her after what's happened? How can I expect her—" He broke off and his face grew harder as he said, "I'll tell you one thing, right or wrong and no matter what I've done, if I ever had anything on her I'd divorce her. I can't have my pride hurt—that would be the last straw."

His tone annoyed Joel, but he said:

"Hasn't she calmed down about the Eva Goebel thing?"

"No." Miles snuffed pessimistically "I can't get over it either"

"I thought it was finished."

"I'm trying not to see Eva again, but you know it isn't easy just to drop something like that—it isn't some girl I kissed last night in a taxi! The psychoanalyst says—"

"I know," Joel interrupted "Stella told me." This was depressing. "Well, as far as I'm concerned if you go to the game I won't see Stella. And I'm sure Stella has nothing on her conscience about anybody."

"Maybe not," Miles repeated listlessly "Anyhow I'll stay and take her to the party. Say," he said suddenly, "I wish you'd come too. I've got to have somebody sympathetic to talk to That's the trouble—I've influenced Stella in everything. Especially I've influenced her so that she likes all the men I like—it's very difficult."

"It must be," Joel agreed.

#### IV

Joel could not get to the dinner. Self-conscious in his silk hat against the unemployment, he waited for the others in front of the Hollywood Theatre and watched the evening parade. obscure replicas

of bright, particular picture stars, spavined men in polo coats, a stomping dervish with the beard and staff of an apostle, a pair of chic Filipinos in collegiate clothes, reminder that this corner of the Republic opened to the seven seas, a long fantastic carnival of young shouts which proved to be a fraternity initiation. The line split to pass two smart limousines that stopped at the curb.

There she was, in a dress like ice-water, made in a thousand pale-blue pieces, with icicles trickling at the throat. He started forward.

"So you like my dress?"

"Where's Miles?"

"He flew to the game after all. He left yesterday morning—at least I think—" She broke off. "I just got a telegram from South Bend saying that he's starting back. I forgot—you know all these people?"

The party of eight moved into the theatre.

Miles had gone after all and Joel wondered if he should have come. But during the performance, with Stella a profile under the pure grain of light hair, he thought no more about Miles. Once he turned and looked at her and she looked back at him, smiling and meeting his eyes for as long as he wanted. Between the acts they smoked in the lobby and she whispered:

"They're all going to the opening of Jack Johnson's night club—I don't want to go, do you?"

"Do we have to?"

"I suppose not." She hesitated. "I'd like to talk to you. I suppose we could go to our house—if I were only sure——"

Again she hesitated and Joel asked.

"Sure of what?"

"Sure that—oh, I'm haywire I know, but how can I be sure Miles went to the game?"

"You mean you think he's with Eva Goebel?"

"No, not so much that—but supposing he was here watching everything I do. You know Miles does odd things sometimes. Once he wanted a man with a long beard to drink tea with him and he sent down to the casting agency for one, and drank tea with him all afternoon."

"That's different. He sent you a wire from South Bend—that proves he's at the game."

After the play they said good night to the others at the curb and were answered by looks of amusement. They slid off along the golden garish thoroughfare through the crowd that had gathered around Stella.

"You see he could arrange the telegrams," Stella said, "very easily."

That was true. And with the idea that perhaps her uneasiness was

justified, Joel grew angry. If Miles had trained a camera on them he felt no obligations toward Miles. Aloud he said:

"That's nonsense."

There were Christmas trees already in the shop windows and the full moon over the boulevard was only a prop, as scenic as the giant boudoir lamps of the corners. On into the dark foliage of Beverly Hills that flamed as eucalyptus by day, Joel saw only the flash of a white face under his own, the arc of her shoulder. She pulled away suddenly and looked up at him.

"Your eyes are like your mother's," she said. "I used to have a scrap book full of pictures of her."

"Your eyes are like your own and not a bit like any other eyes," he answered.

Something made Joel look out into the grounds as they went into the house, as if Miles were lurking in the shrubbery. A telegram waited on the hall table. She read aloud.

CHICAGO.

Home tomorrow night. Thinking of you. Love.

MILES.

"You see," she said, throwing the slip back on the table, "he could easily have faked that." She asked the butler for drinks and sandwiches and ran upstairs, while Joel walked into the empty reception rooms. Strolling about he wandered to the piano where he had stood in disgrace two Sundays before.

"Then we could put over," he said aloud, "a story of divorce, the younger generators and the Foreign Legion."

His thoughts jumped to another telegram.

"You were one of the most agreeable people at our party—"

An idea occurred to him. If Stella's telegram had been purely a gesture of courtesy then it was likely that Miles had inspired it, for it was Miles who had invited him. Probably Miles had said:

"Send him a wire—he's miserable—he thinks he's queered himself."

It fitted in with "I've influenced Stella in everything. Especially I've influenced her so that she likes all the men I like." A woman would do a thing like that because she felt sympathetic—only a man would do it because he felt responsible.

When Stella came back into the room he took both her hands.

"I have a strange feeling that I'm a sort of pawn in a spite game you're playing against Miles," he said.

"Help yourself to a drink."

"And the odd thing is that I'm in love with you anyhow."

The telephone rang and she freed herself to answer it.

"Another wire from Miles," she announced. "He dropped it, or it says he dropped it, from the airplane at Kansas City."

"I suppose he asked to be remembered to me."

"No, he just said he loved me I believe he does. He's so very weak."

"Come sit beside me," Joel urged her.

It was early And it was still a few minutes short of midnight a half-hour later, when Joel walked to the cold hearth, and said tersely

"Meaning that you haven't any curiosity about me?"

"Not at all You attract me a lot and you know it. The point is that I suppose I really do love Miles."

"Obviously"

"And tonight I feel uneasy about everything"

He wasn't angry—he was even faintly relieved that a possible entanglement was avoided. Still as he looked at her, the warmth and softness of her body thawing her cold blue costume, he knew she was one of the things he would always regret.

"I've got to go," he said. "I'll phone a taxi."

"Nonsense—there's a chauffeur on duty"

He winced at her readiness to have him go, and seeing this she kissed him lightly and said, "You're sweet, Joel" Then suddenly three things happened he took down his drink at a gulp, the phone rang loud through the house and a clock in the hall struck in trumpet notes.

*Nine—ten—eleven—twelve—*

v

It was Sunday again. Joel realized that he had come to the theatre this evening with the work of the week still hanging about him like cerements He had made love to Stella as he might attack some matter to be cleaned up hurriedly before the day's end But this was Sunday—the lovely, lazy perspective of the next twenty-four hours unrolled before him—every minute was something to be approached with lulling indirection, every moment held the germ of innumerable possibilities. Nothing was impossible—everything was just beginning. He poured himself another drink.

With a sharp moan, Stella slipped forward inertly by the telephone Joel picked her up and laid her on the sofa. He squirted soda-water on a handkerchief and slapped it over her face. The telephone mouthpiece was still grinding and he put it to his ear.

—"the plane fell just this side of Kansas City. The body of Miles Calman has been identified and—"

He hung up the receiver.

"Lie still," he said, stalling, as Stella opened her eyes.

"Oh, what's happened?" she whispered. "Call them back. Oh, what's happened?"

"I'll call them right away. What's your doctor's name?"

"Did they say Miles was dead?"

"Lie quiet—is there a servant still up?"

"Hold me—I'm frightened."

He put his arm around her.

"I want the name of your doctor," he said sternly. "It may be a mistake but I want someone here."

"It's Doctor—Oh, God, is Miles dead?"

Joel ran upstairs and searched through strange medicine cabinets for spirits of ammonia. When he came down Stella cried—

"He isn't dead—I know he isn't. This is part of his scheme. He's torturing me. I know he's alive. I can feel he's alive."

"I want to get hold of some close friend of yours, Stella. You can't stay here alone tonight."

"Oh, no," she cried. "I can't see anybody. You stay. I haven't got any friend." She got up, tears streaming down her face. "Oh, Miles is my only friend. He's not dead—he can't be dead. I'm going there right away and see. Get a train. You'll have to come with me."

"You can't. There's nothing to do tonight. I want you to tell me the name of some woman I can call. Lois? Joan? Carmel? Isn't there somebody?"

Stella stared at him blindly.

"Eva Goebel was my best friend," she said.

Joel thought of Miles, his sad and desperate face in the office two days before. In the awful silence of his death all was clear about him. He was the only American-born director with both an interesting temperament and an artistic conscience. Meshed in an industry, he had paid with his ruined nerves for having no resilience, no healthy cynicism, no refuge—only a pitiful and precarious escape.

There was a sound at the outer door—it opened suddenly, and there were footsteps in the hall.

"Miles!" Stella screamed. "Is it you, Miles? Oh, it's Miles."

A telegraph boy appeared in the doorway.

"I couldn't find the bell. I heard you talking inside."

The telegram was a duplicate of the one that had been phoned. While Stella read it over and over, as though it were a black lie, Joel telephoned. It was still early and he had difficulty getting anyone; when finally he succeeded in finding some friends he made Stella take a stiff drink.

"You'll stay here, Joel," she whispered, as though she were half-asleep. "You won't go away. Miles liked you—he said you—" She shivered violently, "Oh, my God, you don't know how alone I feel." Her eyes closed, "Put your arms around me. Miles had a suit like

that." She started bolt upright. "Think of what he must have felt. He was afraid of almost everything, anyhow."

She shook her head dazedly. Suddenly she seized Joel's face and held it close to hers.

"You won't go You like me—you love me, don't you? Don't call up anybody. Tomorrow's time enough You stay here with me tonight."

He stared at her, at first incredulously, and then with shocked understanding. In her dark groping Stella was trying to keep Miles alive by sustaining a situation in which he had figured—as if Miles' mind could not die so long as the possibilities that had worried him still existed. It was a distraught and tortured effort to stave off the realization that he was dead.

Resolutely Joel went to the phone and called a doctor.

"Don't, oh, don't call anybody!" Stella cried "Come back here and put your arms around me"

"Is Doctor Bales in?"

"Joel," Stella cried "I thought I could count on you Miles liked you He was jealous of you—Joel, come here"

Ah then—if he betrayed Miles she would be keeping him alive—for if he were really dead how could he be betrayed?

"—has just had a very severe shock. Can you come at once, and get hold of a nurse?"

"Joel!"

Now the door-bell and the telephone began to ring intermittently, and automobiles were stopping in front of the door.

"But you're not going," Stella begged him. "You're going to stay, aren't you?"

"No," he answered. "But I'll be back, if you need me."

Standing on the steps of the house which now hummed and palpitated with the life that flutters around death like protective leaves, he began to sob a little in his throat.

"Everything he touched he did something magical to," he thought. "He even brought that little gamin alive and made her a sort of masterpiece."

And then—

"What a hell of a hole he leaves in this damn wilderness—already!"

And then with a certain bitterness, "Oh, yes, I'll be back—I'll be back!"



# SCOTT FITZGERALD IN HOLLYWOOD

DWIGHT TAYLOR



The whole thing started with a dress shirt. I was very proud of this shirt, because Peter Arno had decorated the front of it, and I particularly admired the ingenuity with which he had utilized the crack down the middle and the place for the studs I found it invaluable for fancy-dress balls. I first met Scott Fitzgerald at one of these functions in New York, and he took to my shirt immediately. He asked me to give it to him. I refused. He considered this to be an unreasonable attitude. I pointed out the advantages of the shirt; that whereas the conventional pirate or Pierrot costume necessitated a certain amount of concentrated and, to my mind, entirely wasted effort, all I had to do was change my shirt. Scott replied that it was precisely this feature which appealed to him. It was a stand-off. The hour was late and the gin synthetic. I remember very little more of the conversation, but we parted with no hard feelings on either side, and I managed to get home with my shirt still on my back.

This was our first encounter, and I remember how charmed I was with the simplicity and directness of a grown man who simply asked for something when he wanted it

I next saw him at the opening of the Swedish Ballet which had arrived in New York from Paris, with scenery and costumes by Jean Cocteau. Scott had already had some experience of the *avant-garde* movement while in Paris, but I had not; and the grotesquerie of the

settings and costumes, together with the dissonance of the music, came to me as a surprise. I will not say that I disliked it, but it left me puzzled. I realize now that I didn't know exactly what I *did* feel. I found myself sitting next to Scott, who was with a party of eight or ten people, including his wife Zelda. Suddenly a male dancer appeared on the stage who, as far as I could determine, was completely naked, save for a coating of bright yellow grease which looked like butter. He proceeded to do a *pas de deux* with the leading ballerina and I took exception to this. Much to my surprise, so did Scott. We expressed our disapproval with catcalls until suppressed by those around us.

"It's the butter," I whispered. "I was always taught that there is a place for everything—and everything in its place."

"It's probably the very *best* butter," said Scott, and this immediate and apt quotation from the Mad Tea Party made us friends at once.

The evening wore on. I remember dimly something about an ostrich and the Eiffel Tower and a photographer. I left the ballet before it was concluded and, with a whispered farewell to Scott, went home.

I used to work a great deal at night in those days and was anxious to get on with some project I had in mind. I hadn't been home twenty minutes before the doorbell rang and I found Scott standing at the portal.

"I couldn't stick it either," he said. "May I come in and have a drink?"

I was living in my mother's home at the time, which had a sort of baronial grandeur about it, and we descended the staircase into the living room where a large fire was burning in the hearth. We discussed the *avant-garde* movement in general and the Swedish Ballet in particular. I felt then that Scott didn't know anything more about it than I did, but his affection for Gertrude Stein and his desire to be "in on things" made him follow the crowd. But he was too American in his very bones to ever really be anything else, and I think it is this indigenous, localized quality in his work which has aroused the curiosity of our young people today.

A few moments later the rest of the party poured in. I was quite unprepared for this invasion. Yet these impromptu midnight raids on each other's domiciles were characteristic of the 'twenties and I should not have been surprised. I got out more liquor, turned on the phonograph and decided to let things take care of themselves.

I was not prepared for Zelda, however. Suddenly she stood up in the center of the big living-room and started to remove her clothes. I was somewhat startled, and asked Scott what it was all about.

"She always does that," he replied. He put down his glass and

went over to her. "Come on, darling," he said "Why don't you go upstairs and take a bath?"

This suggestion alarmed me even further. I expected my parents home at any moment and I didn't quite know what their reaction would be at finding a strange woman in the tub

"I don't think that would be a very good idea," I said. "You see, my parents—"

The others just stood around and grinned. They were all good friends of Scott and Zelda's and evidently had gone through this sort of thing before.

"Then let's go home and take a bath," said Scott. "We'll just ride out to Great Neck and take a bath there."

Docile as a child, Zelda got her cloak and they trooped up the stairs. Scott guided her gently to the door, then turned and whispered to me:

"She'll be all right when she gets home. We've got a long way to go."

I have thought of this remark many times since.

### *WHAT HE NEEDED MONEY FOR*

In the fall of 1931 I came to Hollywood to write for motion pictures. MGM had offered me a three-months contract to see what I could do. The romantic "lost lady" type of story was then very much in vogue, and I was set to work writing on one of these, under the supervision of Irving Thalberg.

For some reason the walls of my office were composed almost entirely of glass. I felt like the proverbial goldfish, and on those occasions when visitors were taken on a tour of the studios I would sometimes be pointed out as an example of a real live writer discovered at his desk. After a few days of this I turned the desk so that it was facing the one solid wall of the cubicle, and presented my back to the windows, as I have seen the orangutan do when out of sorts.

One day I became aware that a very special pair of eyes were burning a hole in the back of my coat, somewhere between the shoulder blades. Turning from my desk I discovered Scott peering in at me through the window. On his face was that twisted little half-smile which was so characteristic of him, and which always reminded me of a little boy who wanted to play but wasn't quite sure of his welcome. I was overjoyed at seeing him again. In the interval life had become quite grim for both of us, and he was a symbol of happier and more careless times.

He came in and sat down. We talked of New York and the people we knew. He explained to me that this visit to Hollywood

was strictly business, because he needed the money badly. The cost of maintaining Zelda, who was now in a sanitarium, and the education of his daughter required all the financial ingenuity and sacrifice he could bring to bear. He announced proudly that he had sworn off drinking, and one look at his clear eyes and his still-boyish face convinced me that this was true

### *A PARTY AT THE THALBERGS'*

Some weeks went by. Scott was anxious to learn the trade and, although a neophyte myself, I helped him in any way I could. I remember he was always worried about camera angles, but I pointed out that it was his dialogue and characterization that they were after, and if he could manage to get his story down he could be sure that they would photograph it

One day we received an invitation to attend a swell party given by Irving Thalberg at the beach. I was amazed at this invitation as I had done nothing particularly outstanding in pictures and was, in fact, considerably worried about where I stood. The explanation, of course, when it came, was absurdly simple. The party was being given in honor of Freddy Lonsdale whom I had known in New York, and it was at his request that I had been invited. Scott, on the other hand, had been invited because he was Scott Fitzgerald, and that, I think, should be sufficient reason for anybody. Nevertheless, he was as pleased and astonished as I, and as we were the only writers invited we planned to motor down together for mutual protection.

When the great day finally arrived I called for him in my car, and after half-an-hour's drive, we found ourselves standing in front of one of those huge white doors which guard the portals of these curious monoliths along the sand. One pressed a button, I remember, and then there was a tremendous answering rattle from an electrical device that released the latch. After entering this door one was confronted by a long walk across a patio to the doors of the house itself. I have become more familiar with these devices since, and I imagine their purpose is to keep out unwelcome visitors, but never in my living memory have I known an instance of anyone pressing these outside bells without receiving a prompt release of the latch; from which I can only conclude that the butlers in charge of these devices are either too lazy to walk across the patio to see who the visitor may be or they have come to the conclusion that all visitors are welcome.

We were shown into a huge living-room, and I could see at once that we had landed on our feet. Everybody who *was* anybody in the picture colony was there. Scott had been fretting about what he

should wear, and I had assured him that anything would do. With a Hollywood party this is usually a safe assumption

Miss Shearer came forward to greet us, and then we were conducted over to Lonsdale who was draped like a melancholy pointer on the arm of his chair. I had determined to stick close to Scott to see that he did not drink. I did not intend to be officious or obtrusive about it, but I had had some experience with alcoholics, and I knew that the nervous pressure of a social occasion can sometimes be alleviated by having a friend close at hand who knows one's problems and can step in at the right moment. I also knew that there had been some trepidation about hiring Scott in the first place because of his failing, and this was certainly not the time or place to give way to it. There was too much at stake.

Silver trays laden with cold, dew-speckled martinis passed continuously beneath our noses. I would shake my head virtuously, and Scott would follow suit. But the room was restless and exciting, with all the glamor and babble of a fair. And what a fair! Pretty faces which had gazed down at one bland enticement from a thousand billboards had now become animate at one's ear. It was heady music and hard to keep a resolution. I became involved in some conversation on my left, and when I turned again, Scott was gone.

I started searching for him in and out of the crowd, but without success. I ran into Bob Montgomery who had just entered from the patio. He was in white riding breeches and black boots. I asked him whether he had seen Scott Fitzgerald and he said no—that he was anxious to meet him. At this moment I felt something jog at my elbow, and turning discovered Scott. He was peering at Montgomery as a man might gaze at a penguin in the zoo.

"Scott," I said, "I'd like you to meet Bob Montgomery."

He didn't answer for a moment, but continued to stare at the actor who was standing in all the grandeur of his polo outfit.

"Why didn't you bring your horse in?" he said slowly, and there was not a vestige of lightness in his face when he said it.

In the brief time that he had been out of my sight he could not have been able to consume more than one or two drinks, yet already here he was as drunk as a man who had been swilling for half the night. My heart sank. Montgomery murmured something and passed on his way.

### *MAN'S BEST FRIEND*

What made Scott decide to sing I will never know. Perhaps some lonely feeling that he was not appreciated here—that his writing was far away in his study, whereas this was an extroverted company,

used to attracting attention in extroverted ways. Whatever the reason, the decision was disastrous.

He suddenly announced, in a loud, clear voice, that he wanted to sing. A curious silence fell upon the room. Miss Shearer asked him what he wished to sing. He said he wished to sing about a dog. Ramon Navarro was selected to vamp an accompaniment, and Miss Shearer's maid was sent upstairs to fetch her dog. The others gathered in a half-circle near the piano, but not too near, their faces devoid of expression, like people gathered at the scene of an accident.

It was the kind of song which might have seemed amusing if one were very drunk and still in one's freshman year at college. The dog, as if touched by some deep feeling of empathy, lay patiently in the crook of his arm, gazing back at the circle of unfriendly faces. As nearly as I can recollect the words at this late date, they were roughly as follows

*In Spain, they have the donkey  
In Australia, the kangaroo,  
In Africa, they have the zebra  
In Switzerland, the zoo  
But in America we have the dog—  
And he's a man's best friend*

This was all right as a starter, and a smile of tolerant amusement started to appear on the faces of the company who had anticipated a complete fiasco, and now thought they began to see some daylight. Unfortunately, the second verse was very much like the first—being nothing more than a simple inventory of the animals of the world, together with the places in which they are found, ending with the same catch-line:

*But in America we have the dog—  
And he's a man's best friend.*

I had begun to fear that this actually *was* the punch line for which everyone had been waiting, and not having achieved its laugh in the first verse, was unlikely to do so in the second, and certainly not in the third. The song was so inadequate to the occasion (or, indeed, to any occasion that I could think of) that the company stood frozen in their places, wondering how to extricate themselves from an unbearable situation. Scott seemed to sense by this time that he was not a success and small beads of perspiration appeared on his forehead. But he was no more able to break the tension than the others and he plunged into the fourth verse of this interminable song like a desperate man plunging into the rapids.

I became aware of a low hissing sound, somewhat like steam escaping from a radiator, and looking around the circle for its source

discovered that it was emanating from Jack Gilbert and Lupe Velez, who were standing together with arms linked and staring at Scott with that incomparable air of superiority which only recently reformed characters seem able to achieve. There was no malice in their faces, but no fun either—it was a complete rejection—and by the most liberal members of the herd.

I will never completely forget the horror of that precise moment. A peculiar characteristic of picture society is that it actually has no social leadership. Nobody sets the pattern of conduct, because this would seem to pre-empt the right to do so; and the desire to appear democratic and hail-fellow-well-met far transcends the human impulse to assume personal responsibility in a difficult situation.

I could see the little figure of Thalberg standing in a doorway at the far end of the room, with his hands plunged deep into his trouser pockets, his shoulders hunched in that characteristic posture of his which seemed to be a withdrawal. There was a slight, not unkind smile on his lips as he looked toward the group at the piano. But he did not move.

Shearer herself was still smiling encouragement at Scott, but there was no longer any conviction in it—only the dog seemed content as it lay in his arm. The scene had taken on the quality of a nightmare, where everyone seemed doomed to remain frozen in his place forever. By a great effort of will I was able to step forward and lay my hand on Scott's arm.

"Come on, Scott," I said. "We're going home."

### DEAR SCOTT . . .

The following morning at the studio I was sitting in my glass cubicle endeavoring to work myself up into the proper Michael Arlen mood, when I again became aware that I was being watched. I turned to see Scott lounging against the lintel of the doorway and regarding me with that faded half-smile on his face which must have devastated a thousand women.

"Nice party," he said.

I nodded. There was a pause.

"How was I?"

"Not so good," I said.

The smile vanished and his face suddenly became that of an old man. It was as if the muscles had been held together by hope and my reply had cut the string. He looked down at the floor, but without changing his position.

"This job means a lot to me," he said. "I hope I didn't make too much of a jackass of myself."

As Mr. Arlen would say, I replied thus-and-that, and he said thus-and-so. He again told me the cost of maintaining Zelda in the sanitarium, and how much he wanted to see that his daughter had a good education and was brought up properly. He told me how hard he had fought the drinking—and how successful he had been.

"I don't know why I chose yesterday of all days to go off," he said ruefully. "I always do that—at just the wrong time."

He reflected

"I've been under quite a strain."

We decided to have lunch together in the commissary, and he proceeded on to his office to do his morning's work

I turned back to my desk and tried to pick up where I had left off. Suddenly the door burst open and Scott again was standing in the doorway, this time with a telegram in his hand. His face was transfigured. He was as young as the minute again, like the night we first met and argued over the Peter Arno shirt

"Listen to this," he said, and proceeded to read the telegram aloud. It was from Norma Shearer and, to the best of my recollection, was worded as follows

"Dear Scott I think you were the nicest person at my party."

After all these years, it still seems to me one of the most gracious gestures on the part of a hostess that I have ever encountered. He was fired the following Saturday.

### *HOW I GOT INTO "CRAZY SUNDAY"*

Fitzgerald returned to New York and I continued on about my chores. I left MGM at the conclusion of my assignment and went to work elsewhere. One loses all track of time in Hollywood, as if one were on a desert island, and it is very difficult to keep up one's contacts with the outer world. I had forgotten all about Scott and the Thalberg party when one day, about a year later, I received a telegram from an old friend of mine in New York:

WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU UP TO OUT THERE? HAVE YOU SEEN A STORY CALLED CRAZY SUNDAY IN THE CURRENT AMERICAN MERCURY?

I hied myself to the nearest newsstand and bought the magazine. The story was by F. Scott Fitzgerald. It was about two writers who had been asked to a big party at the beach house of a famous motion-picture director. One of them gets drunk and makes a fool of himself by singing an unsolicited song. In a carefully delineated passage at the beginning of the story, giving a description of his appearance, and an oblique reference to his famous actress mother, there is no



mistaking the fact that this unfortunate drunk is supposed to be *me!* Scott is the Good Samaritan who takes him home.

The truth is turned topsy-turvy, as it is in *Alice Through the Looking-Glass!* To make matters worse, the unruly guest has an affair with the hostess, and the motion-picture producer is killed in an airplane accident while they are in bed together. Once Scott succeeded in making the transition—taking the guise of another, as Jupiter is said to have done—the sky was the limit, and all kinds of vicarious pleasures could be enjoyed. This is a well-known phenomenon to the psychiatrist—projecting oneself into the skin of others in an attempt to enjoy oneself without feeling guilty. But I wonder how many critics of Fitzgerald's writings realized that many of them sprang from an acute guilt complex, or bothered to seek its cause.

Even Scott's daydreams usually ended in disaster. In *Tender Is the Night*, which he considered his best novel, Dick Diver reflects that he might be able to find happiness if he could ever overcome his tendency to take on the personality of those he cares for. But he is not able to do so. And neither was Scott. In spite of his social ambitions, his playboy role, his Joe College approach, he was an extremely lonely man. In memory he reminds me of a child, playing musical chairs all by himself, in a very vast room, and hoping that he will be able to sit in them all before the music stops forever.

# CYCLISTS' RAID

FRANK ROONEY



Joel Bleeker, owner and operator of the Pendleton Hotel, was adjusting the old redwood clock in the lobby when he heard the sound of the motors. At first he thought it might be one of those four-engine planes on the flights from Los Angeles to San Francisco which occasionally got far enough off course to be heard in the valley. And for a moment, braced against the steadily approaching vibrations of the sound, he had the fantastic notion that the plane was going to strike the hotel. He even glanced at his daughter, Cathy, standing a few feet to his right and staring curiously at the street.

Then with his fingers still on the hour hand of the clock he realized that the sound was not something coming down from the air but the high, sputtering racket of many vehicles moving along the ground. Cathy and Bret Timmons, who owned one of the two drugstores in the town, went out onto the veranda but Bleeker stayed by the clock, consulting the railroad watch he pulled from his vest pocket and moving the hour hand on the clock forward a minute and a half. He stepped back deliberately, shut the glass case and looked at the huge brass numbers and the two ornate brass pointers. It was eight minutes after seven, approximately twenty-two minutes until sundown. He put the railroad watch back in his pocket and walked slowly and incuriously through the open doors of the lobby. He was methodical and orderly and the small things he did every day—like setting the clock—were important to him. He was not to be

hurried—especially by something as elusively irritating as a sound, however unusual.

There were only three people on the veranda when Bleeker came out of the lobby—his daughter Cathy, Timmons, and Francis LaSalle, co-owner of LaSalle and Fleet, Hardware. They stood together quietly, looking, without appearing to stare, at a long stern column of red motorcycles coming from the south, filling the single main street of the town with the noise of a multitude of pistons and the crackling of exhaust pipes. They could see now that the column was led by a single white motorcycle which when it came abreast of the hotel turned abruptly right and stopped. They saw too that the column without seeming to slow down or to execute any elaborate movement had divided itself into two single files. At the approximate second, having received a signal from their leader, they also turned right and stopped.

The whole flanking action, singularly neat and quite like the various vehicular formations he remembered in the Army, was distasteful to Bleeker. It recalled a little too readily his tenure as a lieutenant colonel overseas in England, France, and finally Germany.

"Mr. Bleeker?"

Bleeker realized the whole troop—no one in the town either then or after that night was ever agreed on the exact number of men in the troop—had dismounted and that the leader was addressing him.

"I'm Bleeker." Although he hadn't intended to, he stepped forward when he spoke, much as he had stepped forward in the years when he commanded a battalion.

"I'm Gar Simpson and this is Troop B of the Angeleno Motorcycle Club," the leader said. He was a tall, spare man and his voice was coldly courteous to the point of mockery. "We expect to bivouac outside your town tonight and we wondered if we might use the facilities of your hotel. Of course, sir, we'll pay."

"There's a washroom downstairs. If you can put up with that—"

"That will be fine, sir. Is the dining room still open?"

"It is."

"Could you take care of twenty men?"

"What about the others?"

"They can be accommodated elsewhere, sir."

Simpson saluted casually and, turning to the men assembled stuffily in front of the hotel, issued a few quiet orders. Quickly and efficiently, the men in the troop parked their motorcycles at the curb. About a third of the group detached itself and came deferentially but steadily up the hotel steps. They passed Bleeker who found himself maneuvered aside and went into the lobby. As they passed

him, Bleeker could see the slight converted movement of their faces—though not their eyes, which were covered by large green goggles—toward his daughter Cathy. Bleeker frowned after them but before he could think of anything to say, Simpson, standing now at his left, touched his arm.

"I've divided the others into two groups," he said quietly. "One group will eat at the diner and the other at the Desert Hotel."

"Very good," Bleeker said. "You evidently know the town like a book. The people too. Have you ever been here before?"

"We have a map of all the towns in this part of California, sir. And of course we know the names of all the principal hotels and their proprietors. Personally, I could use a drink. Would you join me?"

"After you," Bleeker said.

He stood watching Simpson stride into the lobby and without any hesitation go directly to the bar. Then he turned to Cathy, seeing Timmons and LaSalle lounging on the railing behind her, their faces already indistinct in the plummeting California twilight.

"You go help in the kitchen, Cathy," Bleeker said. "I think it'd be better if you didn't wait on tables."

"I wonder what they look like behind those goggles," Cathy said.

"Like anybody else," Timmons said. He was about thirty, somewhat coarse and intolerant and a little embarrassed at being in love with a girl as young as Cathy. "Where did you think they came from? Mars?"

"What did they say the name of their club was?" Cathy said.

"Angeleno," LaSalle said.

"They must be from Los Angeles Heighho. Shall I wear my very best gingham, citizen colonel?"

"Remember now—you stay in the kitchen," Bleeker said.

He watched her walk into the lobby, a tall slender girl of seventeen, pretty and enigmatic, with something of the brittle independence of her mother. Bleeker remembered suddenly, although he tried not to, the way her mother had walked away from him that frosty January morning two years ago saying, "I'm going for a ride." And then the two-day search in the mountains after the horse had come back alone and the finding of her body—the neck broken—in the stream at the foot of the cliff. During the war he had never really believed that he would live to get back to Cathy's mother and after the war he hadn't really believed he would be separated from her—not again—not twice in so short a time.

Shaking his head—as if by that motion he could shed his memories as easily as a dog sheds water—Bleeker went in to join Gar Simpson who was sitting at a table in the barroom. Simpson stood politely when Bleeker took the opposite chair.

"How long do you fellows plan to stay?" Bleeker asked. He took the first sip of his drink, looked up, and stared at Simpson.

"Tonight and tomorrow morning," Simpson said.

Like all the others he was dressed in a brown windbreaker, khaki shirt, khaki pants, and as Bleeker had previously observed wore dark calf-length boots. A cloth and leather helmet lay on the table beside Simpson's drink, but he hadn't removed his flat green goggles, an accouterment giving him and the men in his troop the appearance of some tropical tribe with enormous semi-precious eyes, lidless and immovable. That was Bleeker's first impression and, absurd as it was, it didn't seem an exaggeration of fancy but of truth.

"Where do you go after this?"

"North." Simpson took a rolled map from a binocular case slung over his shoulder and spread it on the table. "Roughly we're following the arc of an ellipse with its southern tip based on Los Angeles and its northern end touching Fresno."

"Pretty ambitious for a motorcycle club."

"We have a month," Simpson said. "This is our first week but we're in no hurry and we're out to see plenty of country."

"What are you interested in mainly?"

"Roads. Naturally, being a motorcycle club—you'd be surprised at the rate we're expanding—we'd like to have as much of California as possible opened up to us."

"I see."

"Keeps the boys fit too. The youth of America. Our hope for the future." Simpson pulled sternly at his drink and Bleeker had the impression that Simpson was repressing, openly, and with pride, a vast sparkling ecstasy.

Bleeker sat and watched the young men in the troop file upstairs from the public washroom and stroll casually but nevertheless with discipline into the dining room. They had removed their helmets and strapped them to their belts, each helmet in a prescribed position to the left of the beltbuckle but—like Simpson—they had retained their goggles. Bleeker wondered if they ever removed the goggles long enough to wash under them, and, if they did, what the flesh under them looked like.

"I think I'd better help out at the tables," Bleeker said. He stood up and Simpson stood with him. "You say you're from Troop B? Is that right?"

"Correct. We're forming Troop G now. Someday—"

"You'll be up to Z," Bleeker said.

"And not only in California."

"Where else for instance?"

"Nevada—Arizona—Colorado—Wyoming."

Simpson smiled and Bleeker, turning away from him abruptly,

went into the dining room where he began to help the two waitresses at the tables. He filled water glasses, set out extra forks, and brought steins of beer from the bar. As he served the troop, their polite thanks, yours, ornate and insincere, irritated him. It reminded him of tricks taught to animals, the animals only being allowed to perform under certain obvious conditions of security. And he didn't like the cool way they stared at the two waitresses, both older women and fixtures in the town and then leaned their heads together as if every individual thought had to be pooled and divided equally among them. He admitted, after some covert study, that the twenty men were really only variations of one, the variations, with few exceptions, being too subtle for him to recognize and differentiate. It was the goggles, he decided, covering that part of the face which is most noteworthy and most needed for identification—the eyes and the mask around the eyes.

Bleeker went into the kitchen, pretending to help but really to be near Cathy. The protective father, he thought ironically, watching his daughter cut pie and lay the various colored wedges on the white blue-bordered plates.

"Well, Daddy, what's the verdict?" Cathy looked extremely grave but he could see that she was amused.

"They're a fine body of men."

"Uh-huh. Have you called the police yet?"

He laughed. "It's a good thing you don't play poker."

"Child's play." She slid the last piece of blueberry pie on a plate. "I saw you through the door. You looked like you were ready to crack the Siegfried line—single-handed."

"That man Simpson?"

"What about him?"

"Why don't you go upstairs and read a book or something?"

"Now, Daddy—you're the only professional here. They're just acting like little tin soldiers out on a spree."

"I wish to God they were made of tin."

"All right. I'll keep away from them. I promise." She made a gesture of crossing her throat with the thin edge of a knife. He leaned over and kissed her forehead, his hand feeling awkward and stern on her back.

After dinner the troop went into the bar, moving with a strange co-ordinated fluency that was both casual and military and sat jealously together in one corner of the room. Bleeker served them pitchers of beer and for the most part they talked quietly together, Simpson at their center, while voices guarded and urgent as if they possessed information which couldn't be disseminated safely among the public.

Bleeker left them after a while and went upstairs to his daughter's room. He wasn't used to being severe with Cathy and he was a little embarrassed by what he had said to her in the kitchen. She was turning

the collars of some of his old shirts, using a portable sewing machine he had bought her as a present on her last birthday. As he came in she held one of the shirts comically to the floor lamp and he could see how thin and transparent the material was. Her mother's economy in small things, almost absurd when compared to her limitless generosity in matters of importance, had been one of the family jokes. It gave him an extraordinary sense of pleasure, so pure it was like a sudden inhalation of oxygen, to see that his daughter had not only inherited this tradition but had considered it meaningful enough to carry on. He went down the hall to his own room without saying anything further to her. Cathy was what he himself was in terms which could mean absolutely nothing to anyone else.

He had been in his room for perhaps an hour, working on the hotel accounts and thinking obliquely of the man Simpson, when he heard, faintly and apparently coming from no one direction, the sound of singing. He got up and walked to the windows overlooking the street. Standing there, he thought he could fix the sound farther up the block toward Cunningham's bar. Except for something harsh and mature in the voices it was the kind of singing that might be heard around a Boy Scout campfire, more rhythmic than melodic and more stirring than tuneful. And then he could hear it almost under his feet, coming out of the hotel lobby and making three or four people in the street turn and smile foolishly toward the doors of the veranda.

Oppressed by something sternly joyous in the voices, Bleeker went downstairs to the bar, hearing as he approached the singing become louder and fuller. Outside of Simpson and the twenty men in the troop there were only three townsmen—including LaSalle—in the bar. Simpson, seeing Bleeker in the door, got up and walked over to him, moving him out into the lobby where they could talk.

"I hope the boys aren't disturbing you," he said.

"It's early," Bleeker said.

"In an organization as large and selective as ours it's absolutely necessary to insist on a measure of discipline. And it's equally necessary to allow a certain amount of relaxation."

"The key word is selective, I suppose."

"We have our standards," Simpson said primly.

"May I ask just what the hell your standards are?"

Simpson smiled. "I don't quite understand your irritation, Mr. Bleeker."

"This is an all-year round thing, isn't it? This club of yours?"

"Yes."

"And you have an all-year-round job with the club?"

"Of course."

"That's my objection, Simpson. Briefly and simply stated, what

you're running is a private army " Bleeker tapped the case slung over Simpson's shoulder "Complete with maps, all sorts of local information, and of course a lobby in Sacramento "

"For a man who has traveled as widely as you have, Mr Bleeker, you display an uncommon talent for exaggeration "

"As long as you behave yourselves I don't care what you do This is a small town and we don't have many means of entertainment We go to bed at a decent hour and I suggest you take that into consideration However, have your fun Nobody here has any objections to that "

"And of course we spend our money."

"Yes," Bleeker said "You spend your money "

He walked away from Simpson and went out onto the veranda. The singing was now both in front and in back of him Bleeker stood for a moment on the top steps of the veranda looking at the moon, hung like a slightly soiled but luminous pennant in the sky He was embarrassed by his outburst to Simpson and he couldn't think why he had said such things. Private army Perhaps, as Simpson had said, he was exaggerating He was a small-town man and he had always hated the way men surrendered their individuality to attain perfection as a unit It had been necessary during the war but it wasn't necessary now Kid stuff—with an element of growing pains

He walked down the steps and went up the sidewalk toward Cunningham's bar They were singing there too and he stood outside the big plate-glass window peering in at them and listening to the harsh, pounding voices colored here and there with the sentimentalism of strong beer. Without thinking further he went into the bar It was dim and cool and alien to his eyes and at first he didn't notice the boy sitting by himself in a booth near the front When he did, he was surprised—more than surprised, shocked—to see that the boy wasn't wearing his goggles but had placed them on the table by a bottle of Coca-Cola Impulsively, he walked over to the booth and sat across from the boy

"This seat taken?"

He had to shout over the noise of the singing The boy leaned forward over the table and smiled

"Hope we're not disturbing you."

Bleeker caught the word "disturbing" and shook his head negatively. He pointed to his mouth, then to the boy and to the rest of the group. The boy too shook his head. Bleeker could see that he was young, possibly twenty-five, and that he had dark straight hair cut short and parted neatly at the side The face was square but delicate, the nose short, the mouth wide The best thing about the boy, Bleeker decided, were his eyes, brown perhaps or dark gray, set in two dis-



torted ovals of white flesh which contrasted sharply with the heavily tanned skin on the cheeks, forehead and jaws. With his goggles on he would have looked like the rest. Without them he was a pleasant young man, altogether human and approachable.

Bleeker pointed to the Coca-Cola bottle. "You're not drinking."  
"Beer makes me sick."

Bleeker got the word "beer" and the humorous gulping motion the boy made. They sat exchanging words and sometimes phrases, illustrated always with a series of clumsy, groping gestures until the singing became less coherent and spirited and ended finally in a few isolated coughs. The men in the troop were moving about individually now, some leaning over the bar and talking in hoarse whispers to the bartender, others walking unsteadily from group to group and detaching themselves immediately to go over to another group, the groups usually two or three men constantly edging away from themselves and colliding with and being held briefly by others. Some simply stood in the center of the room and brayed dolorously at the ceiling.

Several of the troop walked out of the bar and Bleeker could see them standing on the wide sidewalk looking up and down the street—as contemptuous of one another's company as they had been glad of it earlier. Or not so much contemptuous as unwilling to be coerced too easily by any authority outside themselves. Bleeker smiled as he thought of Simpson and the man's talk of discipline.

"They're looking for women," the boy said. Bleeker had forgotten the boy temporarily and the sudden words spoken in a normal voice startled and confused him. He thought quickly of Cathy—but then Cathy was safe in her room—probably in bed. He took the watch from his vest pocket and looked at it carefully.

"Five minutes after ten," he said.

"Why do they do that?" the boy demanded. "Why do they have to be so damned indecent about things like that? They haven't got the nerve to do anything but stare at waitresses. And then they get a few beers in them and go around pinching and slapping—they—"

Bleeker shivered with embarrassment. He was looking directly into the boy's eyes and seeing the color run under the tears and the jerky pinching movement of the lids as against something injurious and baleful. It was an emotion too rawly infantile to be seen without being hurt by it and he felt both pity and contempt for a man who would allow himself to display such a feeling—without any provocation—so nakedly to a stranger.

"Sorry," the boy said.

He picked up the green goggles and fitted them awkwardly over his eyes. Bleeker stood up and looked toward the center of the room. Several of the men turned their eyes and then moved their heads away without seeming to notice the boy in the booth. Bleeker understood

them This was the one who could be approached. The reason for that was clear too. He didn't belong. Why and wherefore he would probably never know.

He walked out of the bar and started down the street toward the hotel. The night was clear and cool and smelled faintly of the desert, of sand, of heated rock, of the sweetly-sour plants growing without water and even of the sun which burned itself into the earth and never completely withdrew. There were only a few townsmen on the sidewalk wandering up and down, lured by the presence of something unusual in the town and masking, Bleeker thought, a ruthless and menacing curiosity behind a tolerant grin. He shrugged his shoulders distastefully. He was like a cat staring into a shadow the shape of its fears.

He was no more than a hundred feet from the hotel when he heard—or thought he heard—the sound of automatic firing. It was a well-remembered sound but always new and frightening.

Then he saw the motorcycle moving down the middle of the street, the exhaust sputtering loudly against the human resonance of laughter, catcalls, and epithets. He exhaled gently, the pain in his lungs subsiding with his breath. Another motorcycle speeded after the first and he could see four or five machines being wheeled out and the figures of their riders leaping into the air and bringing their weight down on the starting pedals. He was aware too that the lead motorcycles, having traversed the length of the street had turned and were speeding back to the hotel. He had the sensation of moving—even when he stood still—in relation to the objects heading toward each other. He heard the high unendurable sound of metal squeezing metal and saw the front wheel of a motorcycle twist and wobble and its rider roll along the asphalt toward the gutter where he sat up finally and moved his goggled head feebly from side to side.

As Bleeker looked around him he saw the third group of men which had divided earlier from the other two coming out of a bar across the street from Cunningham's, waving their arms in recognizable motions of cheering. The boy who had been thrown from the motorcycle vomited quietly into the gutter. Bleeker walked very fast toward the hotel. When he reached the top step of the veranda, he was caught and jostled by some five or six cyclists running out of the lobby, one of whom fell and was kicked rudely down the steps. Bleeker staggered against one of the pillars and broke a fingernail catching it. He stood there for a moment, fighting his temper, and then went into the lobby.

A table had been overthrown and lay on its top, the wooden legs stiffly and foolishly exposed, its magazines scattered around it, some with their pages spread face down so that the bindings rose along the back. He stepped on glass and realized one of the panes in the lobby

door had been smashed. One of the troop walked stupidly out of the bar, his body sagging against the impetus propelling him forward until without actually falling he lay stretched on the floor, beer gushing from his mouth and nose and making a green and yellow pool before it sank into the carpet.

As Bleeker walked toward the bar, thinking of Simpson and of what he could say to him, he saw two men going up the stairs toward the second floor. He ran over to intercept them. Recognizing the authority in his voice, they came obediently down the stairs and walked across the lobby to the veranda, one of them saying over his shoulder, "Okay, pop, okay—keep your lid on." The smile they exchanged enraged him. After they were out of sight he ran swiftly up the stairs, panting a little, and along the hall to his daughter's room.

It was quiet and there was no strip of light beneath the door. He stood listening for a moment with his ear to the panels and then turned back toward the stairs.

A man or boy, any of twenty or forty or sixty identical figures, goggled and in khaki, came around the corner of the second-floor corridor and put his hand on the knob of the door nearest the stairs. He squeezed the knob gently and then moved on to the next door, apparently unaware of Bleeker. Bleeker, remembering not to run or shout or knock the man down, walked over to him, took his arm and led him down the stairs, the arm unresisting, even flaccid, in his grip.

Bleeker stood indecisively at the foot of the stairs, watching the man walk automatically away from him. He thought he should go back upstairs and search the hall. And he thought too he had to reach Simpson. Over the noise of the motorcycles moving rapidly up and down the street he heard a crash in the bar, a series of drunken elongated curses, ending abruptly in a small sound like a man's hand laid flatly and sharply on a table.

His head was beginning to ache badly and his stomach to sour under the impact of a slow and steady anger. He walked into the bar and stood staring at Francis LaSalle—LaSalle and Fleet, Hardware—who lay sprawled on the floor, his shoulders touching the brass rail under the bar and his head turned so that his cheek rubbed the black polished wood above the rail. The bartender had his hands below the top of the bar and he was watching Simpson and a half a dozen men arranged in a loose semi-circle above and beyond LaSalle.

Bleeker lifted LaSalle, who was a little dazed but not really hurt, and set him on a chair. After he was sure LaSalle was all right he walked up to Simpson.

"Get your men together," he said. "And get them out of here."

Simpson took out a long yellow wallet folded like a book and laid some money on the bar.

"That should take care of the damages," he said. His tongue was

a little thick and his mouth didn't quite shut after the words were spoken but Bleeker didn't think he was drunk. Bleeker saw too—or thought he saw—the little cold eyes behind the glasses as bright and as sterile as a painted floor. Bleeker raised his arm slightly and lifted his heels off the floor but Simpson turned abruptly and walked away from him, the men in the troop swaying at his heels like a pack of lolling hounds. Bleeker stood looking foolishly after them. He had expected a fight and his body was still poised for one. He grunted heavily.

"Who hit him?" Bleeker motioned toward LaSalle.

"Damned if I know," the bartender said. "They all look alike to me."

That was true of course. He went back into the lobby, hearing LaSalle say, weakly and tearfully, "Goddam them—the bastards." He met Campbell, the deputy sheriff, a tall man with the arms and shoulders of a child beneath a foggy, bloated face.

"Can you do anything?" Bleeker asked. The motorcycles were racing up and down the street, alternately whining and backfiring and one had jumped the curb and was cruising on the sidewalk.

"What do you want me to do?" Campbell demanded. "Put 'em all in jail?"

The motorcycle on the sidewalk speeded up and skidded obliquely into a plate-glass window, the front wheel bucking and climbing the brick base beneath the window. A single large section of glass slipped edge-down to the sidewalk and fell slowly toward the cyclist who, with his feet spread and kicking at the cement, backed clumsily away from it. Bleeker could feel the crash in his teeth.

Now there were other motorcycles on the sidewalk. One of them hit a parked car at the edge of the walk. The rider standing astride his machine beat the window out of the car with his gloved fists. Campbell started down the steps toward him but was driven back by a motorcycle coming from his left. Bleeker could hear the squeal of tires against the wooden riser at the base of the steps. Campbell's hand was on his gun when Bleeker reached him.

"That's no good," he yelled. "Get the state police. Ask for a half dozen squad cars."

Campbell, angry but somewhat relieved, went up the steps and into the lobby. Bleeker couldn't know how long he stood on the veranda watching the mounting devastation on the street—the cyclist racing past store windows and hurling, presumably, beer bottles at the glass fronts, the two, working as a team, knocking down weighing machines and the signs in front of the motion picture theater; the innumerable mounted man running the angry townspeople, alerted and aroused by the awful sounds of damage to their property, back into

their suddenly lighted homes again or up the steps of his hotel or into niches along the main street, into doorways, and occasionally into the ledges and bays of glassless windows.

He saw Simpson—or rather a figure on the white motorcycle, helmeted and goggled—stationed calmly in the middle of the street under a hanging lamp. Presumably, he had been there for some time but Bleeker hadn't seen him, the many rapid movements on the street making any static object unimportant and even, in a sense, invisible. Bleeker saw him now and he felt again that spasm of anger which was like another life inside his body. He could have strangled Simpson then, slowly and with infinite pride. He knew without any effort of reason that Simpson was making no attempt to control his men but waiting rather for that moment when their minds, subdued but never actually helpless, would again take possession of their bodies.

Bleeker turned suddenly and went back into the lobby as if by that gesture of moving away he could pin his thoughts to Simpson, who, hereafter, would be responsible for them. He walked over to the desk where Timmons and Campbell, the deputy, were talking.

"You've got the authority," Timmons was saying angrily. "Fire over their heads. And if that doesn't stop them—"

Campbell looked uneasily at Bleeker. "Maybe if we could get their leader—"

"Did you get the police?" Bleeker asked.

"They're on their way," Campbell said. He avoided looking at Timmons and continued to stare hopefully and miserably at Bleeker.

"You've had your say," Timmons said abruptly. "Now I'll have mine."

He started for the lobby doors but Campbell, suddenly incensed, grabbed his arm.

"You leave this to me," he said. "You start firing a gun—"

Campbell's mouth dropped and Bleeker, turning his head, saw the two motorcycles coming through the lobby doors. They circled leisurely around for a moment and then one of them shot suddenly toward them, the goggled rider looming enormously above the wide handlebars. They scattered, Bleeker diving behind a pillar and Campbell and Timmons jumping behind the desk. The noise of the two machines assaulted them with as much effect as the sight of the speeding metal itself.

Bleeker didn't know why in course of watching the two riders he looked into the hall toward the foot of the stairway. Nor did it seem at all unreasonable that when he looked he should see Cathy standing there. Deeply, underneath the outward preoccupation of his mind, he must have been thinking of her. Now there she was. She wore the familiar green robe, belted and pulled in at the waist and beneath its hem he could see the white slippers and the pink edge

of her nightgown. Her hair was down and he had the impression her eyes were not quite open although, obviously, they were. She looked, he thought, as if she had waked, frowned at the clock, and come downstairs to scold him for staying up too late. He had no idea what time it was.

He saw—and of course Cathy saw—the motorcycle speeding toward her. He was aware that he screamed at her too. She did take a slight backward step and raise her arms in a pathetic warding gesture toward the inhuman figure on the motorcycle but neither could have changed—in that dwarfed period of time and in that short, unmaneuverable space—the course of their actions.

She lay finally across the lower steps, her body clinging to and equally arching away from the base of the newel post. And there was the sudden, shocking exposure of her flesh, the robe and the gown torn away from the leg as if pushed aside by the blood welling from her thigh. When he reached her there was blood in her hair too and someone—not Cathy—was screaming into his ears.

After a while the doctor came and Cathy, her head bandaged and her leg in splints, could be carried into his office and laid on the couch. Bleeker sat on the edge of the couch, his hand over Cathy's, watching the still white face whose eyes were closed and would not, he knew, open again. The doctor, after his first examination, had looked up quickly and since Bleeker too had been bent over Cathy, their heads had been very close together for a moment. The doctor had assumed, almost immediately, his expression of professional austerity but Bleeker had seen him in that moment when he had been thinking as a man, fortified of course by a doctor's knowledge, and Bleeker had known then that Cathy would die but that there would be also this interval of time.

Bleeker turned from watching Cathy and saw Timmons standing across the room. The man was—or had been—crying but his face wasn't set for it and the tears, points of colorless, sparkling water on his jaws, were unexpectedly delicate against the coarse texture of his skin. Timmons waved a bandaged hand awkwardly and Bleeker remembered, abruptly and jarringly, seeing Timmons diving for the motorcycle which had reversed itself, along with the other, and raced out of the lobby.

There was no sound now either from the street or the lobby. It was incredible, thinking of the racket a moment ago, that there should be this utter quietude, not only the lack of noise but the lack of the vibration of movement. The doctor came and went, coming to bend over Cathy and then going away again. Timmons stayed. Beyond shifting his feet occasionally he didn't move at all but stood patiently across the room, his face toward Cathy and Bleeker but not, Bleeker

"The police," Bleeker said sometime later.

"They're gone," Timmons said in hoarse whisper. And then after a while, "They'll get 'em—don't worry."

Bleeker saw that the man blushed helplessly and looked away from him. The police were no good. They would catch Simpson. Simpson would pay damages. And that would be the end of it. Who could identify Cathy's assailant? Not himself, certainly—nor Timmons nor Campbell. They were all alike. They were standardized figurines, seeking in each other a wilfull loss of identity, dividing themselves equally among one another until there was only a single mythical figure, unspeakably sterile and furnishing the norm for hundreds of others. He could not accuse something which didn't actually exist.

He wasn't sure of the exact moment when Cathy died. It might have been when he heard the motorcycle, unbelievably solitary in the quiet night, approaching the town. He knew only that the doctor came for the last time and that there was now a coarse, heavy blanket laid mercifully over Cathy. He stood looking down at the blanket for a moment, whatever he was feeling repressed and delayed inside him, and then went back to the lobby and out onto the veranda. There were a dozen men standing there looking up the street toward the sound of the motorcycle, steadily but slowly coming nearer. He saw that when they glanced at each other their faces were hard and angry but when they looked at him they were respectful and a little abashed.

Bleeker could see from the veranda a number of people moving among the smashed store-fronts, moving, stopping, bending over and then straightening up to move somewhere else, all dressed somewhat extemporaneously and therefore seeming without purpose. What they picked up they put down. What they put down they stared at grimly and then picked up again. They were like a dispossessed minority brutally but lawfully discriminated against. When the motorcycle appeared at the north end of the street they looked at it and then looked away again, dully and seemingly without resentment.

It was only after some moments that they looked up again, this time purposefully, and began to move slowly toward the hotel where the motorcycle had now stopped, the rider standing on the sidewalk, his face raised to the veranda.

No one on the veranda moved until Bleeker, after a visible effort, walked down the steps and stood facing the rider. It was the boy Bleeker had talked to in the bar. The goggles and helmet were hanging at his belt.

"I couldn't stand it any longer," the boy said. "I had to come back."

He looked at Bleeker as if he didn't dare look anywhere else. His

face was adolescently shiny and damp, the marks, Bleeker thought of a proud and articulate fear. He should have been heroic in his willingness to come back to the town after what had been done to it but to Bleeker he was only a dirty little boy returning to a back fence his friends had defaced with pornographic writing and calling attention to the fact that he was afraid to erase the writing but was determined nevertheless to do it. Bleeker was revolted. He hated the boy far more than he could have hated Simpson for bringing this to his attention when he did not want to think of anything or anyone but Cathy.

"I wasn't one of them," the boy said. "You remember, Mr. Bleeker I wasn't drinking."

This declaration of innocence—this willingness to take blame for acts which he hadn't committed—enraged Bleeker.

"You were one of them," he said.

"Yes. But after tonight—"

"Why didn't you stop them?" Bleeker demanded loudly. He felt the murmur of the townspeople at his back and someone breathed harshly on his neck. "You were one of them. You could have done something. Why in God's name didn't you do it?"

"What could I do?" the boy said. He spread his hands and stepped back as if to appeal to the men beyond Bleeker.

Bleeker couldn't remember, either shortly after or much later, exactly what he did then. If the boy hadn't stepped back like that—if he hadn't raised his hand . . . Bleeker was in the middle of a group of bodies and he was striking with his fists and being struck. And then he was kneeling on the sidewalk, holding the boy's head in his lap and trying to protect him from the heavy shoes of the men around him. He was crying out, protesting, exhorting, and after a time the men moved away from him and someone helped him carry the boy up the steps and lay him on the veranda. When he looked up finally only Timmons and the doctor were there. Up and down the street there were now only shadows and the diminishing sounds of invisible bodies. The night was still again as abruptly as it had been confounded with noise.

Some time later Timmons and the doctor carried the boy, alive but terribly hurt, into the hotel. Bleeker sat on the top step of the veranda, staring at the moon which had shifted in the sky and was now nearer the mountains in the west. It was not in any sense romantic or inflamed but coldly clear and sane. And the light it sent was cold and sane and lit in himself what he would have liked to hide.

He could have said that having lost Cathy he was not afraid any longer of losing himself. No one would blame him. Cathy's death was his excuse for striking the boy, hammering him to the sidewalk, and stamping on him as he had never believed he could have stamped on



any living thing. No one would say he should have lost Cathy lightly—without anger and without that appalling desire to avenge her. It was utterly natural—as natural as a man drinking a few beers and riding a motorcycle insanely through a town like this Bleeker shuddered. It might have been all right for a man like Timmons who was and would always be incapable of thinking what he—Joel Bleeker—was thinking. It was not—and would never be—all right for him.

Bleeker got up and stood for a moment on the top step of the veranda. He wanted, abruptly and madly, to scream his agony into the night with no more restraint than that of an animal seeing his guts beneath him on the ground. He wanted to smash something—anything—glass, wood, stone—his own body. He could feel his fists going into the boy's flesh. And there was that bloody but living thing on the sidewalk and himself stooping over to shield it.

After a while, aware that he was leaning against one of the wooden pillars supporting the porch and aware too that his flesh was numb from being pressed against it, he straightened up slowly and turned to go back into the hotel.

There would always be time to make his peace with the dead. There was little if any time to make his peace with the living.

# THE FUME OF POPPIES

JONATHAN KOZOL



ENGLISH 163. English Literature from 1740 to 1800 *Half-course (fall term)*  
*Tuesdays, Thursdays, at nine, Professor Putnam* Major writers of the period with special emphasis on Johnson and Burke. This course assumes that the thought and literature of the Eighteenth Century are already somewhat familiar to the student. Emphasis will be given to major questions of the nature of art and poetry, and the function of criticism. Closed to freshmen

*Announcement of Courses*  
Harvard University, 1956

*Tuesday:* Don't believe she's real.

*Thursday:* She is. Flicks tongue to wet lips. Teeth are gleaming. Would like to be swallowed. Turns her head and touches her nose's tip with one little finger, to scratch. Don't like her jaw. Love her eyes. Twinkle.

*Tuesday:* She is wearing a black dress.

*Thursday:* She has a green ribbon in her hair. Blouse is lemon-colored.

*Tuesday:* First time I looked at her bosom. Name is Wendy.

*Thursday:* Gray cashmere. Six buttons down front. Pocket on left

Jonathan Kozol, from *The Fume of Poppies*. Copyright © 1958 by Jonathan Kozol. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Co.

side. She dropped her pencil in the middle of Professor Putnam's lecture

*Tuesday:* Looked at bosom again. Love her as much as last Tuesday.

*Thursday:* More than ever! She is lovely I can see her legs from here. long and slim. Small bones in her ankle She is wearing pumps and sheer stockings

*Tuesday:* Bare feet and black flats—no stockings. Her legs are tan I can see the calves. Schneider is next to her. Idiot clubby on other side

*Thursday:* "Don't you have long fingers!" she said "Good-sized," I said. Her fingers are long, too.

*Tuesday:* I will never sit with her again. Can't stand it. She makes my legs ache. There is something hurting in my back My notes were shaky

*No class Thursday:* Asian flu takes Professor.

*No class*

*Thursday:* Class Wendy not here

*Tuesday:* Wendy here· reddish and hot looking. She must have fever God, it's beautiful! May she always have it! May I get it! Her cheeks are centered with red. Her head is robin's-egg-shaped

*Thursday:* She has the beautiful fever still.

*Tuesday.* She has a giant pen: ball-point She will stab me with it God I wish!

*Thursday:* Today she wore a blue neckerchief. She was licking the pen with her tongue.

*Tuesday:* Bliss . . . She curls her letters· hand floats along

*Thursday:* Breasts again. Saw them. Left side.

*Tuesday:* Ditto right.

*Thursday:* Schneider's eyes wandering. He was behind. I saw. No wonder! Skin-tight black silk. It will burst Underwear?

*Tuesday:* Doubt it.

*Thursday:* Am not in love with soul In love with body. Love with ear lobes. Breasts. Spaces between toes. Fingers. In love with mysterious parts.

*Tuesday:* Imagination overdoing things.

*Thursday:* Imagination well in control Love soul again.

*Tuesday* Like last Tuesday.

*Thursday:* Cf. last Thursday

*Tuesday:* Putnam *Hamlet*. What is poor man to do Between Heaven and Earth. Earth

*Thursday:* That tongue! Pink. Desire to be swallowed again. Down her tongue into belly Return to womb. Two entrances

*Tuesday:* She is the yellow moon, daffodils, honey, maple syrup. She is the woman on the bottom of the canoe. Cambridge undid me I will undo you.

*Thursday:* Party! Party! We are going to a party. I can't do it

*Tuesday:* I did it. She will come. She is angel cake, my mother's hamper, the Charles River. I think she is a great pink god. Do not know much about goddesses. Don't be afraid. Schneider put his hand on my shoulder Good of him.

*Thursday:* Stayed in bed. Four aspirins.

*Tuesday:* People act as though nothing happened. Schneider's hand on my shoulder. Condescending bastard! Something wrong with me? Why throw up?

*Thursday:* Still don't understand. There she is again. In black. Mourning for me? Will never drink again. Hilliard said: You are one of those poor unfortunate people who simply must not drink.

*Tuesday:* Now back to normal suffering. Hold on. Term nearing end. Sat with Hilliard. Not looking at Wendy. Hilliard tremendous. Best friend.

*Thursday:* Putnam terrific. Johnson = Putnam.

*Tuesday:* Wendy came and sat with me. Whispered all through class. Father is a doctor. They live in Shaker Heights Johnson. I consider myself a good-humoured fellow. Wendy and I held hands. Treachery of the human heart.

*Thursday:* Idiot clubby on other side of her. Blond fool. Burn down Porcellian. Atom bomb in Hasty Pudding.

*Tuesday:* Jealous?

*Thursday:* No! Blond fool is blond fool Senator Saltonstall. Hot potato in each cheek.

*Tuesday:* Description. Ineffably smaller: Everything diminutive Eyes, toes (seen beginning in flat shoes), fingers, ears, robin's-egg head . . . nose . . . A perfect thing. Perfection.

*Thursday:* Last class. Sat with Wendy. Schneider sour. Screw Schneider.

She held my hand throughout class. There is a brown mole on her cheek. Drew pictures of her with little haloes and tiny noses. She tattooed a swastika on my wrist with her ball-point. Next: Six-pointed star. Finally, a cross. Meaning?

She wore a turtleneck sweater: black cashmere. Drew sleeves up near elbows Gray flannel skirt, almost black. Black flats, no sox, no stockings. Saw the beginnings of her toes, spaces between, mere slits. What I thought of. Leather belt on her waist. Very large hips Pretty calves, white now, lost tan. Bones of her ankle still sharp. She squeezed my wrist after tattoos, smudged them all together. Took no notes. Watched her whole time. Fine figure beneath turtleneck. Golf course Indoor golf. Two well-rounded bunkers Ashamed of myself for noticing that. Can't help it. She is all sex and wants to be. I am positive. Takes pleasure in it. Why not? Great earth-mother. Penelope. Gertrude. Bloom. Jung. Great earth-babe. Archetypal sex-machine.

Looked into her eyes. Blue eyes swimming inside mine. Oceans. Felt her swallowing me.

At the end, we were alone in the lecture hall. Putnam gone. Students gone. Johnson gone. Charity, clarity, and Boswell. Talking for victory. Treachery of human heart. Outward leap of imagination. Stability of truth.

Her hand up about my neck indescribable. All aching turned to

one pain Pulled her up with my hands Black cashmere tremendously soft. What did I say about her figure? Oh Lordy!

Spent day down by river Read *Rambler* essays with Wendy  
Going to mountains together for weekend Log cabin Snow and fire-  
place Study for exams.

Dorm open last night Cleaned room Planned to read *Life of Dryden*

Didn't

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## *PART VII*

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# ***FICTION AND FEELING: THE AUTHOR AND AUDIENCE***

One might argue that much of fiction is autobiographical: pure history. The diary and the letter are closely related to the novel, parts of Christopher Isherwood's **Goodbye to Berlin** are journal entries. One chapter in Philip Wylie's **Finnley Wren** reads simply, "I played bridge," which statement whether true or false could easily appear in someone's diary. Many novelists do in fact keep journals, and as we have already seen, authors frequently make specific events the raw material from which they fashion their art. In the fashioning, the author reaches for his audience. Rooney selects Cathy's death, describes it in detail, to communicate feelings, perspectives, values to his audience. Tennessee Williams uses

his real name, Tom, in his story, "The Resemblance Between a Violin Case and a Coffin" I mention this not for any gossip value, but because the fact again points up differences in the use of language for variations of emphasis, on the part of, for instance, the expository writer and that of fiction

The purpose of Tennessee Williams is not primarily to record a case history, as was Robert Lindner's. The "I" who is speaking admits to some distortion of the facts, and even provides a rationale for it. But that rationale, again, is part of the technique by which Williams characterizes his speaker, and by which he intensifies the drama of the speaker's situation. The language of the story is public; its meanings are open to our view, to our experience of them. Similarly, John Espey's main character has many things in common with John Espey. They both frequent places of culture in Southern California, and both are fond of Henry James. But Mr Morris' knowledge of Henry James is used in "Portrait from Memory" to heighten the sense of pathos in this strange confrontation between two people. How would it help us to know if Mr Espey ever met such a woman as Mrs. Pearce? Would we understand the story better? Would the description of the setting in the Pearce house be made more vivid by the knowledge that such a house really exists or existed? Again, would the Williams story be more moving if we knew that the author really had a sister? Would the poignance of young Tom's isolation and confusion be any less if, as it turned out, there never was a person of the author's acquaintance quite like Richard Miles?

What techniques are available to the writer of fiction? Consider the use of death as a theme in several of the stories. Does the idea of death intrinsically move people? If so, then why do we not weep when we read of a family of eight wiped out in a freeway accident? Do we all lack feelings? Why do we respond so emotionally to nonexistent, or fictive, situations? Take "Of this Time, of that Place." How does Lionel Trilling reach his audience? This story, very popular among students, depicts a variety of young people encountered by Professor Howe during his teaching day. The academic year passes, and he finds himself involved with several of the students, and, toward some of them, his attitudes are sometimes highly vindictive. Why then do students like the story? Do all students like the story? And what does it mean if a student fails to like the story?

By what means does each writer in this section induce the reader to identify with his main character? Or does the author try to accomplish this aim in every case? The main character in the Coates story seems to be cruel, and Conrad's main character appears to be guilty of an almost unimaginable crime against his own brother. Espey's main character knows much about literature



and art, perhaps more than the reader. Can't the reader take offense? And Tennessee Williams' Tom has socially unacceptable impulses. Professor Howe is at times a self-righteous snob. Are we to take kindly to all these people? And if not, how can the author retain his audience? And even if he retains his audience, how will he manage to prompt the desired response from his reader?

In this section we move into the world of fiction. But, again, we must remind ourselves not to expect all things suddenly to become new. In that direction lies a mystique of literature as somehow made up of language of an order entirely different from that in other forms of discourse. The most obvious misunderstanding deriving from such a mystique is the notion of the "two cultures," separated eternally by their use of different languages. If we read carefully, we soon see that writers of fiction, like writers of exposition, describe, select details (observable to the reader), provide perspectives, place ideas in a recognizable order. Only now the **emphasis** turns from the fixation of beliefs to the prompting of feelings and the engaging of fictive possibilities. The question, Do people really think, feel, and act like Mrs. Pearce? has been replaced by another. What would it be like if they did?

This is more than a semantic game. Fiction involves a logic, just as exposition does. It is impossible for Blackburn suddenly to start behaving like Ferdinand Tertan, for each detail selected by Trilling functions like a logical axiom, individuating a particular character from all others. A sudden shift in behavior would violate the logic of the story, and it would certainly irritate the reader. (Imagine the first half of "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" attached to the last half of "The Snows of Kilimanjaro") Consistency is the name usually given to this logic, and it is this logic which allows us to talk coherently about characters, scenes, and plots in works of fiction. We discussed an aspect of this logic in earlier sections. It is impossible, barring mental breakdown—and by this I refer to the logic of decorum—impossible for the President of the United States to follow his Inaugural Address with the performance of a soft shoe dance in the manner of Danny Kaye. In just the same way, an audience would be irritated if, in the closing scenes of the play, King Lear began to act like Volpone.

The logic of consistency is what most critics refer to when they speak of literary or artistic "truth." The term can be misleading, especially if it goes hand in glove with invidious comparisons with "other forms of truth." The only serious problem in the idea that these short stories contain truth might come from the implication that values in the language must answer to extra-literary criteria of truth value. We have dealt with the naiveté of this point of

view in the previous section. The "truth" of a literary work is like the neatness of a logical formula that works: the parts of both are "true" to other parts of each.

When I ask, then, Why does Mrs. Pearce deceive her husband by pretending she and Mr. Morris have not spoken of Henry James? I am asking a literary question. Any proper answer will speak to the interrelations of the various parts of the story. What hints do we find of her relationship to her husband? Why does Espey choose Henry James rather than some other fictive writer for his characters to discuss? Why does he take such pains to describe the house, outside and inside? Why does the time of day make a difference to the story? Answers to such questions are comments on the way the parts of a work of art **function**, or relate to each other.

The job of the descriptive writer was to select details which might usefully discriminate one object from all others. The writer of fiction also chooses details. Tennessee Williams conveys the sense of Tom's loneliness and frustration, Lionel Trilling of Blackburn's boorishness, and so on. Consider the means by which the various authors in this section provide a logic to their stories. How do they set limits on our expectations? Imagine, if you can, alternative forms of conduct, different attitudes, for various characters.

# THE RESEMBLANCE BETWEEN A VIOLIN CASE AND A COFFIN

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS



With her advantage of more than two years and the earlier maturity of girls, my sister moved before me into that country of mysterious differences where children grow up. And although we naturally continued to live in the same house, she seemed to have gone on a journey while she remained in sight. The difference came about more abruptly than you would think possible, and it was vast, it was like the two sides of the Sunflower River that ran through the town where we lived. On one side was a wilderness where giant cypresses seemed to engage in mute rites of reverence at the edge of the river, and the blurred pallor of the Dobyne place that used to be a plantation, now vacant and seemingly ravaged by some impalpable violence fiercer than flames, and back of this dusky curtain, the immense cottonfields that absorbed the whole visible distance in one sweeping gesture. But on the other side, avenues, commerce, pavements and homes of people: those two, separated by only a yellowish, languorous stream that you could throw a rock over. The rumbling wooden bridge that divided, or joined, those banks was hardly shorter than the interval in which my sister moved away from me. Her look was startled, mine was bewildered and hurt. Either there was no explanation or none was permitted between the one departing and the one left

behind. The earliest beginning of it that I can remember was one day when my sister got up later than usual with an odd look, not as if she had been crying, although perhaps she had, but as though she had received some painful or frightening surprise, and I observed an equally odd difference in the manner toward her of my mother and grandmother. She was escorted to the kitchen table for breakfast as though she were in danger of toppling over on either side, and everything was handed to her as though she could not reach for it. She was addressed in hushed and solicitous voices, almost the way that docile servants speak to an employer. I was baffled and a little disgusted. I received no attention at all, and the one or two glances given me by my sister had a peculiar look of resentment in them. It was as if I had struck her the night before and given her a bloody nose or a black eye, except that she wore no bruise, no visible injury, and there had been no altercation between us in recent days. I spoke to her several times, but for some reason she ignored my remarks, and when I became irritated and yelled at her, my grandmother suddenly reached over and twisted my ear, which was one of the few times that I can remember when she ever offered me more than the gentlest reproach. It was a Saturday morning, I remember, of a hot yellow day and it was the hour when my sister and I would ordinarily take to the streets on our wheels. But the custom was now disregarded. After breakfast my sister appeared somewhat strengthened but still alarmingly pale and as silent as ever. She was then escorted to the parlor and encouraged to sit down at the piano. She spoke in a low whimpering tone to my grandmother who adjusted the piano stool very carefully and placed a cushion on it and even turned the pages of sheet music for her as if she were incapable of finding the place for herself. She was working on a simple piece called *The Aeolian Harp*, and my grandmother sat beside her while she played, counting out the tempo in a barely audible voice, now and then reaching out to touch the wrists of my sister in order to remind her to keep them arched. Upstairs my mother began to sing to herself which was something she only did when my father had just left on a long trip with his samples and would not be likely to return for quite a while, and my grandfather, up since daybreak, was mumbling a sermon to himself in the study. All was peaceful except my sister's face. I did not know whether to go outside or stay in. I hung around the parlor a little while, and finally I said to Grand, "Why can't she practice later?" As if I had made some really brutal remark, my sister jumped up in tears and fled to her upstairs bedroom. What was the matter with her? My grandmother said, "Your sister is not well today." She said it gently and gravely, and then she started to follow my sister upstairs, and I was deserted. I was left alone in the very uninteresting parlor. The idea of riding alone on my wheel did not please me for often when I did that, I was set upon

by the rougher boys of the town who called me Preacher and took a peculiar delight in asking me obscene questions that would embarrass me to the point of nausea . . .

In this way was instituted the time of estrangement that I could not understand. From that time on the division between us was ever more clearly established. It seemed that my mother and grandmother were approving and conspiring to increase it. They had never before bothered over the fact that I had depended so much on the companionship of my sister but now they were continually asking me why I did not make friends with other children. I was ashamed to tell them that other children frightened me nor was I willing to admit that my sister's wild imagination and inexhaustible spirits made all other substitute companions seem like the shadows of shades, for now that she had abandoned me, mysteriously and willfully withdrawn her enchanting intimacy, I felt too resentful even to acknowledge secretly, to myself, how much had been lost through what she had taken away . . .

Sometimes I think she might have fled back into the more familiar country of childhood if she had been allowed to, but the grown-up ladies of the house, and even the colored girl, Ozzie, were continually telling her that such and such a thing was not proper for her to do. It was not proper for my sister not to wear stockings or to crouch in the yard at a place where the earth was worn bare to bounce a rubber ball and scoop up starry-pointed bits of black metal called jacks. It was not even proper for me to come into her room without knocking. All of these proprieties struck me as mean and silly and perverse, and the wound of them turned me inward.

My sister had been magically suited to the wild country of childhood but it remained to be seen how she would adapt herself to the uniform and yet more complex world that grown girls enter. I suspect that I have defined that world incorrectly with the word uniform; later, yes, it becomes uniform, it straightens out into an all too regular pattern. But between childhood and adulthood there is a broken terrain which is possibly even wilder than childhood was. The wilderness is interior. The vines and the brambles seem to have been left behind but actually they are thicker and more confusing, although they are not so noticeable from the outside. Those few years of dangerous passage are an ascent into unknown hills. They take the breath sometimes and bewilder the vision. My mother and maternal grandmother came of a calmer blood than my sister and I. They were unable to suspect the hazards that we were faced with, having in us the turbulent blood of our father. Irreconcilables fought for supremacy in us; peace could never be made: at best a smoldering sort of armistice might be reached after many battles. Childhood had held those clashes in abeyance. They were somehow timed to explode at adolescence,

silently, shaking the earth where we were standing. My sister now felt those tremors under her feet. It seemed to me that a shadow had fallen on her. Or had it fallen on me, with her light at a distance? Yes, it was as if someone had carried a lamp into another room that I could not enter. I watched her from a distance and under a shadow. And looking back on it now, I see that those two or three years when the fatal dice were still in the tilted box, were the years of her beauty. The long copperish curls which had swung below her shoulders, bobbing almost constantly with excitement, were unexpectedly removed one day, an afternoon of a day soon after the one when she had fled from the piano in reasonless tears. Mother took her downtown. I was not allowed to go with them but was told once more to find someone else to play with. And my sister returned without her long copper curls. It was like a formal acknowledgment of the sorrowful differences and division which had haunted the house for some time. I noted as she came in the front door that she had now begun to imitate the walk of grown ladies, the graceful and quick and decorous steps of my mother, and that she kept her arms at her sides instead of flung out as if brushing curtains aside as she sprang forward in the abruptly lost days. But there was much more than that. When she entered the parlor, at the fading hour of the afternoon, it was as momentous as if brass horns had sounded, she wore such beauty. Mother came after her looking flushed with excitement and my grandmother descended the stairs with unusual lightness. They spoke in hushed voices. Astonishing, said my mother. She's like Isabel. This was the name of a sister of my father's who was a famed beauty in Knoxville. She was probably the one woman in the world of whom my mother was intimidated, and our occasional summer journeys to Knoxville from the Delta of Mississippi were like priestly tributes to a seat of holiness, for though my mother would certainly never make verbal acknowledgment of my aunt's superiority in matters of taste and definitions of quality, it was nevertheless apparent that she approached Knoxville and my father's younger sister in something very close to fear and trembling. Isabel had a flame, there was no doubt about it, a lambency which, once felt, would not fade from the eyes. It had an awful quality, as though it shone outward while it burned inward. And not long after the time of these recollections she was to die, quite abruptly and irrelevantly, as the result of the removal of an infected wisdom tooth, with her legend entrusted to various bewildered eyes and hearts and memories she had stamped, including mine, which have sometimes confused her with very dissimilar ladies. She is like Isabel, said my mother in a hushed voice. My grandmother did not admit that this was so. She also admired Isabel but thought her too interfering and was unable to separate her altogether from the excessively close blood-connection with my father, whom I should say, in

passage, was a devilish man, possibly not understood but certainly hard to live with . . .

What I saw was not Isabel in my sister but a grown stranger whose beauty sharpened my sense of being alone. I saw that it was all over, put away in a box like a doll no longer cared for, the magical intimacy of our childhood together, the soap-bubble afternoons and the games with paper dolls cut out of dress catalogues and the breathless races here and there on our wheels. For the first time, yes, I saw her beauty I consciously avowed it to myself, although it seems to me that I turned away from it, averted my look from the pride with which she strolled into the parlor and stood by the mantel mirror to be admired. And it was then, about that time, that I began to find life unsatisfactory as an explanation of itself and was forced to adopt the method of the artist of not explaining but putting the blocks together in some other way that seems more significant to him. Which is a rather fancy way of saying I started writing . . .

My sister also had a separate occupation which was her study of music, at first conducted under my grandmother's instruction but now entrusted to a professional teacher whose name was Miss Aeble, an almost typical spinster, who lived in a small frame house with a porch covered by moonvines and a fence covered by honeysuckle. Her name was pronounced *Ail-ly*. She supported herself and a paralyzed father by giving lessons in violin and piano, neither of which she played very well herself but for which she had great gifts as a teacher. If not great gifts, at least great enthusiasm. She was a true romanticist. She talked so excitedly that she got ahead of herself and looked bewildered and cried out, What was I saying? She was one of the innocents of the world, appreciated only by her pupils and a few persons a generation older than herself. Her pupils nearly always came to adore her, she gave them a feeling that playing little pieces on the piano or scratching out little tunes on a fiddle made up for everything that was ostensibly wrong in a world made by God but disarranged by the devil. She was religious and ecstatic. She never admitted that anyone of her pupils, even the ones that were unmistakably tone-deaf, were deficient in musical talent. And the few that could perform tolerably well she was certain had genius. She had two real star pupils, my sister, on the piano, and a boy named Richard Miles who studied the violin. Her enthusiasm for these two was unbounded. It is true that my sister had a nice touch and that Richard Miles had a pure tone on the fiddle, but Miss Aeble dreamed of them in terms of playing duets to great ovations in the world's capital cities.

Richard Miles, I think of him now as a boy, for he was about seventeen, but at that time he seemed a complete adult to me, even immeasurably older than my sister who was fourteen. I resented him fiercely even though I began, almost immediately after learning of

his existence, to dream about him as I had formerly dreamed of story-book heroes. His name began to inhabit the rectory. It was almost constantly on the lips of my sister, this strange young lady who had come to live with us. It had a curious lightness, that name, in the way that she spoke it. It did not seem to fall from her lips but to be released from them. The moment spoken, it rose into the air and shimmered and floated and took on gorgeous colors the way that soap bubbles did that we used to blow from the sunny back steps in the summer. Those bubbles lifted and floated and they eventually broke but never until other bubbles had floated beside them. Golden they were, and the name of Richard had a golden sound, too. The second name, being Miles, gave a suggestion of distance, so Richard was something both radiant and far away.

My sister's obsession with Richard may have been even more intense than mine. Since mine was copied from hers, it was probably hers that was greater in the beginning. But while mine was of a shy and sorrowful kind, involved with my sense of abandonment, hers at first seemed to be joyous. She had fallen in love. As always, I followed suit. But while love made her brilliant, at first, it made me laggard and dull. It filled me with sad confusion. It tied my tongue or made it stammer and it flashed so unbearably in my eyes that I had to turn them away. These are the intensities that one cannot live with, that he has to outgrow if he wants to survive. But who can help grieving for them? If the blood vessels could hold them, how much better to keep those early loves with us? But if we did, the veins would break and the passion explode into darkness long before the necessary time for it.

I remember one afternoon in fall when my sister and I were walking along a street when Richard Miles appeared suddenly before us from somewhere with a startling cry. I see him bounding, probably down the steps of Miss Aehle's white cottage, emerging unexpectedly from the vines. Probably Miss Aehle's because he bore his violin case, and I remember thinking how closely it resembled a little coffin, a coffin made for a small child or a doll. About people you knew in your childhood it is rarely possible to remember their appearance except as ugly or beautiful or light or dark. Richard was light and he was probably more beautiful than any boy I have seen since. I do not even remember if he was light in the sense of being blond or if the lightness came from a quality in him deeper than hair or skin. Yes, probably both, for he was one of those people who move in light, provided by practically everything about them. This detail I do remember. He wore a white shirt, and through its cloth could be seen the fair skin of his shoulders. And for the first time, prematurely, I was aware of skin as an attraction. A thing that might be desirable to touch. This awareness entered my mind, my



senses, like the sudden streak of flame that follows a comet. And my undoing, already started by Richard's mere coming toward us, was now completed. When he turned to me and held his enormous hand out, I did a thing so grotesque that I could never afterwards be near him without a blistering sense of shame. Instead of taking the hand I ducked away from him. I made a mumbling sound that could have had very little resemblance to speech, and then brushed past their two figures, his and my beaming sister's, and fled into a drugstore just beyond.

That same fall the pupils of Miss Aehele performed in a concert. This concert was held in the parish house of my grandfather's church. And for weeks preceding it the pupils made preparation for the occasion which seemed as important as Christmas. My sister and Richard Miles were to play a duet, she on the piano, of course, and he on the violin. They practiced separately and they practiced together. Separately my sister played the piece very well, but for some reason, more portentous than it seemed at the time, she had great difficulty in playing to Richard's accompaniment. Suddenly her fingers would turn to thumbs, her wrists would flatten out and become cramped, her whole figure would hunch rigidly toward the piano and her beauty and grace would vanish. It was strange, but Miss Aehele was certain that it would be overcome with repeated practice. And Richard was patient, he was incredibly patient, he seemed to be far more concerned for my sister's sake than his own. Extra hours of practice were necessary. Sometimes when they had left Miss Aehele's, at the arrival of other pupils, they would continue at our house. The afternoons were consequently unsafe. I never knew when the front door might open on Richard's dreadful beauty and his greeting which I could not respond to, could not endure, must fly grotesquely away from. But the house was so arranged that although I hid in my bedroom at these hours of practice, I was still able to watch them at the piano. My bedroom looked out upon the staircase which descended into the parlor where they practiced. The piano was directly within my line of vision. It was in the parlor's lightest corner, with lace-curtained windows on either side of it, the sunlight only fretted by patterns of lace and ferns.

During the final week before the concert—or was it recital they called it?—Richard Miles came over almost invariably at four in the afternoon, which was the last hour of really good sunlight in late October. And always a little before that time I would lower the green blind in my bedroom and with a fantastic stealth, as if a sound would betray a disgusting action, I would open the door two inches, an aperture just enough to enclose the piano corner as by the lateral boundaries of a stage. When I heard them enter the front door, or even before, when I saw their shadows thrown against the oval glass

and curtain the door surrounded or heard their voices as they climbed to the porch, I would flatten myself on my belly on the cold floor and remain in that position as long as they stayed, no matter how my knees or elbows ached, and I was so fearful of betraying this watch that I kept over them while they practiced that I hardly dared to breathe.

The transference of my interest to Richard now seemed complete. I would barely notice my sister at the piano, groan at her repeated blunders only in sympathy for him. When I recall what a little puritan I was in those days, there must have been a shocking ambivalence in my thoughts and sensations as I gazed down upon him through the crack of the door. How on earth did I explain to myself, at that time, the fascination of his physical being without, at the same time, confessing to myself that I was a little monster of sensuality? Or was that actually before I had begun to associate the sensual with the impure, an error that tortured me during and after pubescence, or did I, and this seems most likely, now, say to myself, Yes, Tom, you're a monster! But that's how it is and there's nothing to be done about it. And so continued to feast my eyes on his beauty. This much is certain. Whatever resistance there may have been from the "legion of decency" in my soul was exhausted in the first skirmish, not exterminated but thoroughly trounced, and its subsequent complaints were in the form of unseen blushes. Not that there was really anything to be ashamed of in adoring the beauty of Richard. It was surely made for that purpose, and boys of my age are made to be stirred by such ideals of grace. The sheer white cloth in which I had originally seen his upper body was always worn by it, and now, in those afternoons, because of the position of the piano between two windows that cast their beams at cross angles, the white material became diaphanous with light, the torso shone through it, faintly pink and silver, the nipples on the chest and the armpits a little darker, and the diaphragm visibly pulsing as he breathed. It is possible that I have seen more graceful bodies, but I am not sure that I have, and his remains, I believe, a subconscious standard. And looking back upon him now, and upon the devout little mystic of carnality that I was as I crouched on a chill bedroom floor, I think of Camilla Rucellai, that highstrung mystic of Florence who is supposed to have seen Pico della Mirandola entering the streets of that city on a milk-white horse in a storm of sunlight and flowers, and to have fainted at the spectacle of him, and murmured, as she revived, *He will pass in the time of lilies!* meaning that he would die early, since nothing so fair could decline by common degrees in a faded season. The light was certainly there in all its fullness, and even a kind of flowers, at least shadows of them, for there were flowers of lace in the window curtains and actual branches of fern which the light projected across him;

no storm of flowers but the shadows of flowers which are perhaps more fitting

The way that he lifted and handled his violin! First he would roll up the sleeves of his white shirt and remove his necktie and loosen his collar as though he were making preparations for love. Then there was a metallic snap as he released the lock on the case of the violin. Then the upper lid was pushed back and the sunlight fell on the dazzling interior of the case. It was plush-lined and the plush was emerald. The violin itself was somewhat darker than blood and even more lustrous. To Richard I think it must have seemed more precious. His hands and his arms as he lifted it from the case, they said the word love more sweetly than speech could say it, and, oh, what precocious fantasies their grace and tenderness would excite in me. I was a wounded soldier, the youngest of the regiment and he, Richard, was my young officer, jeopardizing his life to lift me from the field where I had fallen and carry me back to safety in the same cradle of arms that supported his violin now. The dreams, perhaps, went further, but I have already dwelt sufficiently upon the sudden triumph of unchastity back of my burning eyes, that needs no more annotation . . .

I now feel some anxiety that this story will seem to be losing itself like a path that has climbed a hill and then lost itself in an overgrowth of brambles. For I have now told you all but one of the things that stand out very clearly, and yet I have not approached any sort of conclusion. There is, of course, a conclusion. However indefinite, there always is some point which serves that need of remembrances and stories.

The remaining very clear thing is the evening of the recital in mid-November, but before an account of that, I should tell more of my sister in this troubled state of hers. It might be possible to willfully thrust myself into her mind, her emotions, but I question the wisdom of it for at that time I was an almost hostile onlooker where she was concerned. Hurt feelings and jealous feelings were too thickly involved in my view of her at that time. As though she were being punished for a betrayal of our childhood companionship, I felt a gratification tinged with contempt at her difficulties in the duet with Richard. One evening I overheard a telephone call which mother received from Miss Aehle. Miss Aehle was first perplexed and now genuinely alarmed and totally mystified by the sudden decline of my sister's vaunted aptitude for the piano. She had been singing her praises for months. Now it appeared that my sister was about to disgrace her publicly, for she was not only unable, suddenly, to learn new pieces but was forgetting the old ones. It had been planned, originally, for her to play several solo numbers at the recital before

and leading up to the duet with Richard. The solos now had to be canceled from the program, and Miss Aehele was even fearful that my sister would not be able to perform in the duet. She wondered if my mother could think of some reason why my sister had undergone this very inopportune and painful decline? Was she sleeping badly, how was her appetite, was she very moody? Mother came away from the telephone in a very cross humor with the teacher. She repeated all the complaints and apprehensions and questions to my grandmother who said nothing but pursed her lips and shook her head while she sewed like one of those venerable women who understand and govern the fates of mortals, but she had nothing to offer in the way of a practical solution except to say that perhaps it was a mistake for brilliant children to be pushed into things like this so early . . .

Richard stayed patient with her most of the time, and there were occasional periods of revival, when she would attack the piano with an explosion of confidence and the melodies would surge beneath her fingers like birds out of cages. Such a resurgence would never last till the end of a piece. There would be a stumble, and then another collapse. Once Richard himself was unstrung. He pushed his violin high into the air like a broom sweeping cobwebs off the ceiling. He strode around the parlor brandishing it like that and uttering groans that were both sincere and comic; when he returned to the piano, where she crouched in dismay, he took hold of her shoulders and gave them a shake. She burst into tears and would have fled upstairs but he caught hold of her by the newel post of the staircase. He would not let go of her. He detained her with murmurs I couldn't quite hear, and drew her gently back to the piano corner. And then he sat down on the piano stool with his great hands gripping each side of her narrow waist while she sobbed with her face averted and her fingers knotting together. And while I watched them from my cave of darkness, my body learned, at least three years too early, the fierceness and fire of the will of life to transcend the single body, and so to continue to follow light's curve and time's . . .

The evening of the recital my sister complained at supper that her hands were stiff, and she kept rubbing them together and even held them over the spout of the teapot to warm them with the steam. She looked very pretty, I remember, when she was dressed. Her color was higher than I had ever seen it, but there were tiny beads of sweat at her temples and she ordered me angrily out of her room when I appeared in the doorway before she was ready to pass the family's inspection. She wore silver slippers and a very grownup-looking dress that was the greenish sea-color of her eyes. It had the low waist that was fashionable at that time and there were silver beads on it in loops and fringes. Her bedroom was steaming from

the adjoining bath. She opened the window. Grandmother slammed it down, declaring that she would catch cold. Oh, leave me alone, she answered. The muscles in her throat were curiously prominent as she stared in the glass. Stop powdering, said my grandmother, you're caking your face with powder. Well, it's my face, she retorted. And then came near to flying into a tantrum at some small critical comment offered by Mother. I have no talent, she said, I have no talent for music! Why do I have to do it, why do you make me, why was I forced into this? Even my grandmother finally gave up and retired from the room. But when it came time to leave for the parish house, my sister came downstairs looking fairly collected and said not another word as we made our departure. Once in the automobile she whispered something about her hair being mussed. She kept her stiff hands knotted in her lap. We drove first to Miss Aeble's and found her in a state of hysteria because Richard had fallen off a bicycle that afternoon and skinned his fingers. She was sure it would hinder his playing. But when we arrived at the parish house, Richard was already there as calm as a duckpond, playing delicately with the mute on the strings and no apparent disability. We left them, teacher and performers, in the cloakroom and went to take our seats in the auditorium which was beginning to fill, and I remember noticing a half-erased inscription on a blackboard which had something to do with a Sunday School lesson.

No, it did not go off well. They played without sheet music, and my sister made all the mistakes she had made in practicing and several new ones. She could not seem to remember the composition beyond the first few pages; it was a fairly long one, and those pages she repeated twice, possibly even three times. But Richard was heroic. He seemed to anticipate every wrong note that she struck and to bring down his bow on the strings with an extra strength to cover and rectify it. When she began to lose control altogether, I saw him edging up closer to her position, so that his radiant figure shielded her partly from view, and I saw him, at a crucial moment, when it seemed that the duet might collapse altogether, raise his bow high in the air, at the same time catching his breath in a sort of "Hah!" a sound I heard much later from bullfighters daring a charge, and lower it to the strings in a masterful sweep that took the lead from my sister and plunged them into the passage that she had forgotten in her panic. . . . For a bar or two, I think, she stopped playing, sat there motionless, stunned. And then, finally, when he turned his back to the audience and murmured something to her, she started again. She started playing again but Richard played so brilliantly and so richly that the piano was barely noticeable underneath him. And so they got through it, and when it was finished they received an ovation. My sister started to rush for the cloakroom. But Richard

seized her wrist and held her back. Then something odd happened. Instead of bowing she suddenly turned and pressed her forehead against him, pressed it against the lapel of his blue serge suit. He blushed and bowed and touched her waist with his fingers, gently, his eyes glancing down . . .

We drove home in silence, almost. There was a conspiracy to ignore that anything unfortunate had happened. My sister said nothing. She sat with her hands knotted in her lap exactly as she had been before the recital, and when I looked at her I noticed that her shoulders were too narrow and her mouth a little too wide for real beauty, and that her recent habit of hunching made her seem a little bit like an old lady being imitated by a child.

At that point Richard Miles faded out of our lives for my sister refused to continue to study music, and not long afterwards my father received an advancement, an office job as a minor executive in a northern shoe company, and we moved from the South. No, I am not putting all of these things in their exact chronological order, I may as well confess it, but if I did I would violate my honor as a teller of stories .

As for Richard, the truth is exactly congruous to the poem. A year or so later we learned, in that northern city to which we had moved, that he had died of pneumonia. And then I remembered the case of his violin, and how it resembled so much a little black coffin made for a child or a doll . . .

# PORTRAIT FROM MEMORY

JOHN J. ESPEY



Although it is more than twenty years since I saw Amy Pearce, the impression she made upon me remains so clear that even the casual mention of her or her husband, such as I heard a few days ago at the Pasadena Art Institute's showing of private collections, can bring back to me the details of our one meeting and revive the sense of understanding I experienced in those hours. At the Art Institute I had been standing in the room containing the terra cotta exhibits, waiting for a friend who was a few minutes late, when I heard a man say to the woman with him, evidently his wife, "Oh, I think those came to him when he married—the Hollister money, you know," and, following the direction of their eyes, I saw the glass-shelved case of Tanagra figurines and realized that they were speaking of Harrison Pearce.

But the man was mistaken about the Hollister connection, for Harrison Pearce—and the neatly lettered card acknowledging his loan of the collection for the exhibition seemed almost to insist upon the point by failing to mention it—whatever he got aside from the person, certainly a handsome one, of Mary Hollister and the Hollister money, he did not get the Tanagra figurines. They had come to him from his first wife, who had been Amy Hensley before their marriage.

Nowadays the Harrison Pearces' wealth, their benefactions, their philanthropic gestures, are so much in the public eye—I might almost say so unrelievedly in the public eye—that I suppose it is not surprising most persons should think of Harrison Pearce as never having been

married to anyone but Mary Hollister. Certainly Amy brought him not very much more than the figurines and the rather Gothic frame mansion in Riverside where I once saw them both and which he has since, I understand, sold as being not quite worthy of him now

For myself, when I first heard of the collection, its presence in California startled me. I felt that it must be almost as out of place as many persons visiting the Huntington Art Gallery in San Marino surely feel that collection to be as they stroll past its acres of the English portrait school, so chastely framed, so reverently hung, so astonishingly unconnected with anything about them. The Hensley Tanagras, however, weren't exactly the same story, though to a degree they do represent, I suppose, the same sort of plunder. They came from the collecting habits of an early New England Hensley—Ezra, I believe—whose trading in the Mediterranean in the first part of the last century not only established his family in a modest way but also brought it a number of what persons at the time referred to as *objets d'art*

The subsequent history of the collection, the Hensleys' move to California in the next generation and the building of the Riverside house, I cannot give in detail, but when Amy Hensley and Harrison Pearce married shortly after her mother's death, the house and the figurines, in addition to some small steady income, were important parts of Amy's dowry

That was all I knew of the matter twenty years ago, and my curiosity was so aroused by the image of this collection gathering dust, as I supposed, in the Riverside mansion, that I set about with youthful optimism finding out how I could see it. This proved to be easier than I had first imagined, for through a family connection, my uncle Leland Morris to be precise, I learned that Harrison Pearce was always happy to show the collection and I was told that he had issued a *carte blanche* invitation to me to call whenever I was next in Riverside. Perhaps the ease with which all this was arranged put me off a little, for I didn't immediately take advantage of the opening and, in fact, more or less let the whole thing slide for some weeks.

Even then, it was only because of the invitation that I took the Pearces by surprise, for having driven from Pasadena to San Bernardino early one morning in order to look after some family business and having concluded my affairs far earlier than I had expected to, I decided to drop down to Riverside for lunch. Not until I drove through the outskirts of the city did I think of the Pearces and decide that even though it was eleven already, certainly an awkward hour in the morning, I would call, hardly expecting to find the Pearces at home to me, but thinking that I might possibly get a glimpse of the figurines.

The house, the old Hensley place, I was prepared for, having



called more than once on early Riverside families, and the wooden Gothic, the narrow flight of steps to the door, seemed almost familiar. My ring was answered by a maid who, when I had explained my call and said that I hoped merely for a look at the collection and didn't want to disturb the Pearces, showed me through the hall, down two steps and through a pair of plum-colored portieres into the drawing room.

I had waited only a few minutes when Amy Pearce herself came into the room, pausing an instant before she took the two steps down into it from the hallway. My first impression, if it could be called that, for I was upset at having bothered the household, was of a rather plain, short woman, somewhat older than I had thought she would be, for I had not realized that Harrison Pearce's wife was his senior. She wore a quilted yellow brocade robe, gathered in abruptly at the waist and reaching her ankles, and her light brown hair, though not at all disarranged, had an air of being somewhat informally pinned up.

When she spoke, her voice was low, a little husky it seemed to me from the first. "I'm afraid the maid wasn't very clear," she said, "and she forgot to take your card."

"I'm Arthur Morris," I said, "and my business really isn't anything more than self-satisfaction," after which I went on to explain.

"Oh, the Hensley Tanagras, of course," she said. "And you are Leland Morris's nephew. But first, do sit down for a moment."

I apologized for taking her time, but she insisted that I stay, at least until her husband, whom she was expecting at any moment, could show me the collection himself.

And so we sat and talked, at first rather slackly, I fear, for I was interested only in seeing the Tanagras, but as we continued to sit there and exchange remarks, I grew increasingly conscious of Amy Pearce, not as Harrison Pearce's wife (they had been married almost three years at the time) but as herself. The unconventional costume in which she had received me, the occasional flashes of animation that moved what I had first thought to be the rather ordinary features of her pale face, began to exert a surprising appeal.

My impression of a husky voice continued, and when a short spasm of breathlessness interrupted her, I said that I was sorry to find her unwell, to take her by surprise. She raised her eyebrows at this, and I, embarrassed by what I thought was her reaction to my presumption, stammered something about a cold and, rushing on, wondered if she were troubled by asthma or hay fever as I was at certain seasons.

Then she smiled and, waving her right hand in a mild gesture towards herself, said, "Oh, my dear, you mean *this*! But it's nothing—I mean it *can't* be anything to us, or—" and she hesitated, looking

at me as if gauging the weight of what she could say, what she could put upon me, "or there would be no point."

"Well, then, no," I said, sensing for the first time the reserves she was drawing upon.

We had talked together perhaps fifteen minutes after this when Amy Pearce asked me the question that was to open up entire new scenes, that was to open, so to speak, everything and reveal areas I should never have suspected existed otherwise. Without leaning forward, without indeed seeming to give her question any emphasis, or special accent, letting the question itself, its own importance, its undertones, accent themselves, she asked, "Are you a reader of Henry James, Mr. Morris?"

This was, of course, twenty years ago, a time, everyone will remember, if it is possible nowadays to remember such a time, before such a question would be, as it would today, quite common place. It was not, I mean to suggest, a matter of belonging to a cult, as it would be a few years later, or of being a magazine reader, as now, but rather of living as one willing to go apart from the fashion. No, twenty years ago such a question was not a light one, nothing to be tossed out casually, but a gesture of welcome, of encouragement, of offering more if the invitation should be accepted.

And I flatter myself, perhaps, in thinking that I recognized then, on the instant—though surely I may exaggerate in memory the completeness of my response—the importance of Amy Pearce's question. And I may flatter myself as well that I gave no greater accent, attempted to set no higher pitch or richer tone when I replied, "But yes."

"I had supposed it was possible," she said, still without emphasis. Then she stirred a trifle and went on, "No, I should have said I had supposed it probable."

"You are generous," I said.

For some moments we sat without speaking, inspecting, as it were, the reaches that had opened out before us, wondering where to turn in this sudden expansion, what direction to take, sensing that the line once taken might lead us irrevocably to its end.

Yet the conversation renewed itself lightly enough, for she gestured casually with both hands, turning them outwards as if in mild supplication, and laughing in what seemed a deeper voice than before, for the huskiness had returned, she said, "I wonder, sometimes, how one would prepare a reader today, where to begin, what first choice?"

What I felt she wanted, what she was too discreet to ask for, was not what one would do for another, but how one had oneself discovered, explored, understood, continued; and I said, "With *The American*, I think. Yes, for there you have a central theme, stated

simply and not too difficult despite certain apparent contradictions."

"And then?"

"Then, the lesson learned, one can go on swiftly *The Portrait*, I think, for the sudden widening, the quick mastery. And of course always on the side the shorter pieces, the filling out of the pattern."

"Always, of course," she said, and I could see that I had pleased her. "And then?"

"*What Maisie Knew—The Ambassadors*"

"Ah!"

"And then everything"

"But what?"

"*The Golden Bowl*." I found myself gesturing involuntarily. "*The Wings of the Dove*."

"Yes, yes, it's a good choice."

"But," I said, picking up the slight hesitation in her approval, "there could be, of course, other ways, some surely better."

"Not better," she said, "but perhaps different." She paused. "It is only that after the beginning, one might go on a little more confidently, leap ahead as it were, an act of faith."

"Yes, that would be for the strong."

"Oh, the strong," she said, leaving the phrase on a high tone to float in the air between us "Not, perhaps, the strong, but at least the understanding."

And as I looked at her I noticed how her appearance had been animated, how the rather expressionless face, as I had first thought it, had lighted up, how incisive the gestures had become, and how light her voice, when it was not troubled by the huskiness, how almost girlish and fresh it sounded.

We were interrupted, and it seemed even then the right word, by her husband's arrival. Anyone who knows Harrison Pearce today, I imagine, can hardly persuade himself that he was ever anything other than what he is now. Once you have heard him make a speech, propose a toast, tender a few remarks, Harrison Pearce remains forever frozen in his public attitudes. At our meeting now, however, the effect was not quite the same, for he was still in formation, still searching the limits of the character that he was to enter and fill out. Even if one had never seen him again, the performance would have been an interesting one, but anyone able to foresee the final product, anyone familiar with the present aloofness breaking smiling into recognition would have been startled by the abruptly cordial greeting he gave me, the jerky stride across the room, the too forwardly ready hand.

He would allow nothing to keep us from looking at the Tanagras, though by this time I had almost forgotten the figurines. Amy followed us, insisting that we go on ahead of her to the library

where the collection occupied a glass cabinet. Here Harrison Pierce unlocked the doors and almost unctuously began to tell me about the collection, the uniqueness of certain figures, and to comment on the brilliance of glaze here and there. As everyone who has seen them knows today, the Pearce Tanagras, as they are now called, are altogether choice, even if they represent only certain types; for the types themselves, the delightful female figures, the characteristic attitudes of head and general liveliness, are among the most attractive.

Soon the maid, carrying glasses and a decanter of sherry, came into the room. Once again I insisted that I must leave, that I had had no intention of breaking in upon them in this fashion, yet both Harrison Pearce and his wife insisted, quite urgently, that I stay and eat with them; so after only the briefest demurral, I capitulated.

But I was to be disappointed; for when, in an early pause as we sat at the table, Amy Pearce still wearing the quilted yellow robe, I turned to her and said, "Henry James would surely have been interested in the figurines, their American gathering and the curiosity of their finding their way to California," she said instantly, "You are one of his admirers, Mr. Morris?" And she said it so blandly, and as if she knew that I would show no surprise, that I found it easy to reply, "Yes, and for some reason the Tanagras made me think of him."

"Ah, yes," Amy said. "But surely you read the moderns?"

And here Pearce was able to take part again, for he said, "Oh, my dear, you read so much. Really Morris, you should speak to her, for I can see that the two of you have taken to each other. Tell her to get out into the light, take a part in things."

Before I could say anything to this extraordinary plea, Amy commented dryly, "Oh, come now, Harry."

"A part in *what* is, I suppose, the crux," I said, earning a swift glance of gratitude.

The remainder of our conversation went on conventionally enough until the end of the meal, and then to my surprise, as his wife said we might return to the drawing room for our coffee, Harrison Pearce pressed me to stay—"You seem to be good for her"—but announced that he himself must leave immediately for the city.

So once again I entered the drawing room, brushing through the portieres, this time hardly as a stranger. And after the coffee had been served and the maid dismissed, we sat in silence. I had been stopped at the table; I had stayed; and now I was waiting.

If there was any real hesitation on Amy Pearce's side, it was, I imagine, only a pause to decide where to take up again, whether to leap ahead or to advance slowly. When she did speak it was almost in the nature of a diversion; for she said, smiling, as if

she knew she would surprise me, "And what would *you* make of the figurines?"

I laughed in acknowledgement that I had been caught. "That would be hard to say," I parried. "Perhaps they would be, after all, not genuine, you know, but flawed beneath the surface."

"Ah, but they aren't," she said without resentment.

"Still, if we invent, you could allow some latitude."

"You would surely be false to your model in that," she took me up mercilessly.

"Yes, of course you're right," I said and waited.

Once again she offered what seemed to be a demarche. "We were speaking of our contemporaries," she said. "What strikes me most about them, what indeed is the most discouraging thing one can say about them, is that they start, not where the previous generation left off, but far before the previous generation's starting point and never come to the beginning."

I was not to be drawn beyond passive agreement and said only that it might be the difference between greatness and talent.

"But you're wrong, you know," she said. "It isn't that. No, no, it's a whole matter of awareness, of understanding what needs to be said. I think of certain sentences that are unequalled."

She stopped speaking and for the moment seemed unwilling to continue, as if she were reviewing in her mind the echoes of familiar words. I received her permission to smoke in a gesture of approval for me followed by one of refusal for herself. Then, her voice lower and huskier than before, she quoted, "*She sat in her corner, so motionless, so passive, simply with the sense of being carried, so detached from hope and regret, that if her spirit was haunted with sudden pictures, it might have been the spirit disembarassed of the flesh.*"

"And yet that wasn't all, surely, for Isabel Archer," I said. "There is a sense of the future."

Once more the low voice spoke, "*She saw herself, in the distant years, still in the attitude of a woman who had her life to live, and these intimations contradicted the spirit of the present hour.*"

As she spoke, the lowness of her tones, the moving quality of her voice, the purity of the language she quoted, worked their spell on the room and I felt the atmosphere tighten, the distance between us shorten. The sun, striking through the slats of the Venetian blinds, picked up the silver of the coffee service on the low table in front of us and the whole room was banded with light. I watch the blue smoke rise from the cigarette between my fingers, and the trembling of my hand gave it an added throb as it went up through the bands of sunlight.

"Yes," she said, "there is that, of course, and one hardly knows." Then once more she quoted, "*To live only to suffer—only to feel the injury of life repeated and enlarged—it seemed to her that she was too valuable, too capable, for that.*"

The light reflected from the silver struck up into her face, and I could see clearly now, as I had not seen before, how its lines were informed with pain

The room grew almost unbearably breathless and I was held by her clear amber eyes now as she looked at me, and I was aware of the bands of light creeping across the room. It seemed to me that my entire self was swept with compassion, and that the room waited only for the right note to ring out. In my agitation I rose, and the streamers of smoke, swirling up through the bright bands, again gave a sense of vibration

"Isabel Archer," I said, still fastened to her by her eyes, my own voice trembling

"Isabel had life," she said. Just as she spoke a spasm seized her and for a few moments she almost lost control of her breathing.

Then, the room still vibrating about me, the air pulsing with light, I understood at last, and I struck the note, the inevitable pitch.

"Milly Theale!" I said

She gave me no answer, but the note rang true, and I stood there half blinded from the light flashing off the silver, the pulsings about me, the smoke quivering up in blue ribbons

How long I stood there I could not be certain, for the knowing eyes held me.

Now there was nothing more to say. I had been satisfied, had received what I had asked for. I must go. One did not surpass such a moment, one did not wait for the high strange tone to die.

But simply to leave, surely that was not enough

"I shall come again," I said.

And then she let me have it, full in the face, dazzlingly, the amber eyes altogether aware. "Ah," she said, "but would it really signify?"

And she was right, I knew, as I stumbled up the steps, pushing aside the portieres, scarcely noticing the maid, who hovered at the door. She was right, I knew, my eyes shrinking from the harsh California sunlight, for nothing else could signify after this quaint announcement of her oncoming death.

# THE LAGOON

JOSEPH CONRAD



The white man, leaning with both arms over the roof of the little house in the stern of the boat, said to the steersman—

“We will pass the night in Arsat’s clearing. It is late.”

The Malay only grunted, and went on looking fixedly at the river. The white man rested his chin on his crossed arms and gazed at the wake of the boat. At the end of the straight avenue of forests cut by the intense glitter of the river, the sun appeared unclouded and dazzling, poised low over the water that shone smoothly like a band of metal. The forests, sombre and dull, stood motionless and silent on each side of the broad stream. At the foot of big, towering trees, trunkless nipa palms rose from the mud of the bank, in bunches of leaves enormous and heavy, that hung unstirring over the brown swirl of eddies. In the stillness of the air every tree, every leaf, every bough, every tendril of creeper and every petal of minute blossoms seemed to have been bewitched into an immobility perfect and final. Nothing moved on the river but the eight paddles that rose flashing regularly, dipped together with a single splash; while the steersman swept right and left with a periodic and sudden flourish of his blade describing a glinting semicircle above his head. The churned-up water frothed alongside with a confused murmur. And the white man’s canoe, advancing upstream in the short-lived disturbance of its own making, seemed to enter the portals of a land from which the very memory of motion had forever departed.

The white man, turning his back upon the setting sun, looked

along the empty and broad expanse of the sea-reach. For the last three miles of its course the wandering, hesitating river, as if enticed irresistibly by the freedom of an open horizon, flows straight into the sea, flows straight to the east—to the east that harbours both light and darkness. Astern of the boat the repeated call of some bird, a cry discordant and feeble, skipped along over the smooth water and lost itself, before it could reach the other shore, in the breathless silence of the world.

The steersman dug his paddle into the stream, and held hard with stiffened arms, his body thrown forward. The water gurgled aloud, and suddenly the long straight reach seemed to pivot on its centre, the forests swung in a semicircle, and the slanting beams of sunset touched the broadside of the canoe with a fiery glow, throwing the slender and distorted shadows of its crew upon the streaked glitter of the river. The white man turned to look ahead. The course of the boat had been altered at right-angles to the stream, and the carved dragon-head of its prow was pointing now at a gap in the fringing bushes of the bank. It glided through, brushing the overhanging twigs, and disappeared from the river like some slim and amphibious creature leaving the water for its lair in the forests.

The narrow creek was like a ditch: tortuous, fabulously deep; filled with gloom under the thin strip of pure and shining blue of the heaven. Immense trees soared up, invisible behind the festooned draperies of creepers. Here and there, near the glistening blackness of the water, a twisted root of some tall tree showed amongst the tracery of small ferns, black and dull, writhing and motionless, like an arrested snake. The short words of the paddlers reverberated loudly between the thick and sombre walls of vegetation. Darkness oozed out from between the trees, through the tangled maze of the creepers, from behind the great fantastic and unstirring leaves, the darkness, mysterious and invincible; the darkness scented and poisonous of impenetrable forests.

The men poled in the shoaling water. The creek broadened, opening out into a wide sweep of a stagnant lagoon. The forests receded from the marshy bank, leaving a level strip of bright green, reedy grass to frame the reflected blueness of the sky. A fleecy pink cloud drifted high above, trailing the delicate colouring of its image under the floating leaves and the silvery blossoms of the lotus. A little house, perched on high piles, appeared black in the distance. Near it, two tall nibong palms, that seemed to have come out of the forests in the background, leaned slightly over the ragged roof, with a suggestion of sad tenderness and care in the droop of their leafy and soaring heads.

The steersman, pointing with his paddle, said, "Arsat is there. I see his canoe fast between the piles."



The polers ran along the sides of the boat glancing over their shoulders at the end of the day's journey. They would have preferred to spend the night somewhere else than on this lagoon of weird aspect and ghostly reputation. Moreover, they disliked Arsat, first as a stranger, and also because he who repairs a ruined house, and dwells in it, proclaims that he is not afraid to live amongst the spirits that haunt the places abandoned by mankind. Such a man can disturb the course of fate by glances or words; while his familiar ghosts are not easy to propitiate by casual wayfarers upon whom they long to wreak the malice of their human master. White men care not for such things, being unbelievers and in league with the Father of Evil, who leads them unharmed through the invisible dangers of this world. To the warnings of the righteous they oppose an offensive pretence of disbelief. What is there to be done?

So they thought, throwing their weight on the end of their long poles. The big canoe glided on swiftly, noiselessly, and smoothly, towards Arsat's clearing, till, in a great rattling of poles thrown down, and the loud murmurs of "Allah be praised!" it came with a gentle knock against the crooked piles below the house.

The boatmen with uplifted faces shouted discordantly, "Arsat! O Arsat!" Nobody came. The white man began to climb the rude ladder giving access to the bamboo platform before the house. The juragan of the boat said sulkily, "We will cook in the sampan, and sleep on the water."

"Pass my blankets and the basket," said the white man, curtly.

He knelt on the edge of the platform to receive the bundle. Then the boat shoved off, and the white man, standing up, confronted Arsat, who had come out through the low door of his hut. He was a man young, powerful, with broad chest and muscular arms. He had nothing on but his sarong. His head was bare. His big, soft eyes stared eagerly at the white man, but his voice and demeanour were composed as he asked, without any words of greeting—

"Have you medicine, Tuan?"

"No," said the visitor in a startled tone. "No. Why? Is there sickness in the house?"

"Enter and see," replied Arsat, in the same calm manner, and turning short round, passed again through the small doorway. The white man, dropping his bundles, followed.

In the dim light of the dwelling he made out on a couch of bamboos a woman stretched on her back under a broad sheet of red cotton cloth. She lay still, as if dead; but her big eyes, wide open, glittered in the gloom, staring upwards at the slender rafters, motionless and unseeing. She was in a high fever, and evidently unconscious. Her cheeks were sunk slightly, her lips were partly open, and on the young face there was the ominous and fixed expression—

the absorbed, contemplating expression of the unconscious who are going to die. The two men stood looking down at her in silence.

"Has she been long ill?" asked the traveller.

"I have not slept for five nights," answered the Malay, in a deliberate tone. "At first she heard voices calling her from the water and struggled against me who held her. But since the sun of to-day rose she hears nothing—she hears not me. She sees nothing. She sees not me—me!"

He remained silent for a minute, then asked softly—

"Tuan, will she die?"

"I fear so," said the white man, sorrowfully. He had known Arsat years ago, in a far country in times of trouble and danger, when no friendship is to be despised. And since his Malay friend had come unexpectedly to dwell in the hut on the lagoon with a strange woman, he had slept many times there, in his journeys up and down the river. He liked the man who knew how to keep faith in council and how to fight without fear by the side of his white friend. He liked him—not so much perhaps as a man likes his favourite dog—but still he liked him well enough to help and ask no questions, to think sometimes vaguely and hazily in the midst of his own pursuits, about the lonely man and the long-haired woman with audacious face and triumphant eyes, who lived together hidden by the forests—alone and feared.

The white man came out of the hut in time to see the enormous conflagration of sunset put out by the swift and stealthy shadows that, rising like a black and impalpable vapour above the tree-tops, spread over the heaven, extinguishing the crimson glow of floating clouds and the red brilliance of departing daylight. In a few moments all the stars came out above the intense blackness of the earth and the great lagoon gleaming suddenly with reflected lights resembled an oval patch of night sky flung down into the hopeless and abysmal night of the wilderness. The white man had some supper out of the basket, then collecting a few sticks that lay about the platform, made up a small fire, not for warmth, but for the sake of the smoke, which would keep off the mosquitos. He wrapped himself in the blankets and sat with his back against the reed wall of the house, smoking thoughtfully.

Arsat came through the doorway with noiseless steps and squatted down by the fire. The white man moved his outstretched legs a little.

"She breathes," said Arsat in a low voice, anticipating the expected question. "She breathes and burns as if with a great fire. She speaks not; she hears not—and burns!"

He paused for a moment, then asked in a quiet, incurious tone—

"Tuan . . . will she die?"

The white man moved his shoulders uneasily and muttered in a hesitating manner—

"If such is her fate."

"No, Tuan," said Arsath, calmly "If such is my fate. I hear, I see, I wait I remember . . . Tuan, do you remember the old days? Do you remember my brother?"

"Yes," said the white man. The Malay rose suddenly and went in. The other, sitting still outside, could hear the voice in the hut. Arsath said: "Hear me! Speak!" His words were succeeded by a complete silence "O Diamelen!" he cried, suddenly. After that cry there was a deep sigh. Arsath came out and sank down again in his old place.

They sat in silence before the fire. There was no sound within the house, there was no sound near them, but far away on the lagoon they could hear the voices of the boatmen ringing fitful and distinct on the calm water. The fire in the bows of the sampan shone faintly in the distance with a hazy red glow. Then it died out. The voices ceased. The land and the water slept invisible, unstirring and mute. It was as though there had been nothing left in the world but the glitter of stars streaming, ceaseless and vain, through the black stillness of the night

The white man gazed straight before him into the darkness with wide-open eyes. The fear and fascination, the inspiration and the wonder of death—of death near, unavoidable, and unseen, soothed the unrest of his race and stirred the most indistinct, the most intimate of his thoughts. The ever-ready suspicion of evil, the gnawing suspicion that lurks in our hearts, flowed out into the stillness round him—into the stillness profound and dumb, and made it appear untrustworthy and infamous, like the placid and impenetrable mask of an unjustifiable violence. In that fleeting and powerful disturbance of his being the earth enfolded in the starlight peace became a shadowy country of inhuman strife, a battle-field of phantoms terrible and charming, august or ignoble, struggling ardently for the possession of our helpless hearts. An unquiet and mysterious country of inextinguishable desires and fears.

A plaintive murmur rose in the night, a murmur saddening and startling, as if the great solitudes of surrounding woods had tried to whisper into his ear the wisdom of their immense and lofty indifference. Sounds hesitating and vague floated in the air round him, shaped themselves slowly into words, and at last flowed on gently in a murmuring stream of soft and monotonous sentences. He stirred like a man walking up and changed his position slightly. Arsath, motionless and shadowy, sitting with bowed head under the stars, was speaking in a low and dreamy tone—

"... for where can we lay down the heaviness of our trouble but in a friend's heart? A man must speak of war and of love. You, Tuan,

know what war is, and you have seen me in time of danger seek death as other men seek life! A writing may be lost; a lie may be written; but what the eye has seen is truth and remains in the mind!"

"I remember," said the white man, quietly. Arsat went on with mournful composure—

"Therefore I shall speak to you of love. Speak in the night. Speak before both night and love are gone—and the eye of day looks upon my sorrow and my shame, upon my blackened face; upon my burnt-up heart."

A sigh, short and faint, marked an almost imperceptible pause, and then his words flowed on, without a stir, without a gesture.

"After the time of trouble and war was over and you went away from my country in the pursuit of your desires, which we, men of the islands, cannot understand, I and my brother became again, as we had been before, the sword-bearers of the Ruler. You know we were men of family, belonging to a ruling race, and more fit than any to carry on our right shoulder the emblem of power. And in the time of prosperity Si Dendring showed us favour, as we, in time of sorrow, had showed to him the faithfulness of our courage. It was a time of peace. A time of deer-hunts and cock-fights, of idle talks and foolish squabbles between men whose bellies are full and weapons are rusty. But the sower watched the young rice-shoots grow up without fear, and the traders came and went, departed lean and returned fat into the river of peace. They brought news, too. Brought lies and truth mixed together, so that no man knew when to rejoice and when to be sorry. We heard from them about you also. They had seen you here and had seen you there. And I was glad to hear, for I remembered the stirring times, and I always remembered you, Tuan, till the time came when my eyes could see nothing in the past, because they had looked upon the one who is dying there—in the house."

He stopped to exclaim in an intense whisper, "O Mara bahia! O Calamity!" then went on speaking a little louder.

"There's no worse enemy and no better friend than a brother, Tuan, for one brother knows another, and in perfect knowledge is strength for good or evil. I loved my brother. I went to him and told him that I could see nothing but one face, hear nothing but one voice. He told me 'Open your heart so that she can see what is in it—and wait. Patience is wisdom. Inchi Midah may die or our Ruler may throw off his fear of a woman!' . . . I waited! . . . You remember the lady with the veiled face, Tuan, and the fear of our Ruler before her cunning and temper. And if she wanted her servant, what could I do? But I fed the hunger of my heart on short glances and stealthy words. I loitered on the path to the bath-houses in the daytime, and when the sun had fallen behind the forest I crept along the jasmine hedges of the women's courtyard. Unseeing, we spoke to one another

through the scent of flowers, through the veil of leaves, through the blades of long grass that stood still before our lips; so great was our prudence, so faint was the murmur of our great longing. The time passed swiftly . . . and there were whispers amongst women—and our enemies watched—my brother was gloomy, and I began to think of killing and of a fierce death. . . . We are of a people who take what they want—like you whites. There is a time when a man should forget loyalty and respect. Might and authority are given to rulers, but to all men is given love and strength and courage. My brother said, 'You shall take her from their midst. We are two who are like one.' And I answered, 'Let it be soon, for I find no warmth in sunlight that does not shine upon her.' Our time came when the Ruler and all the great people went to the mouth of the river to fish by torchlight. There were hundreds of boats, and on the white sand, between the water and the forests, dwellings of leaves were built for the households of the Rajahs. The smoke of cooking-fires was like a blue mist of the evening, and many voices rang in it joyfully. While they were making the boats ready to beat up the fish, my brother came to me and said, 'To-night!' I looked to my weapons, and when the time came our canoe took its place in the circle of boats carrying the torches. The lights blazed on the water, but behind the boats there was darkness. When the shouting began and the excitement made them like mad we dropped out. The water swallowed our fire, and we floated back to the shore that was dark with only here and there the glimmer of embers. We could hear the talk of slavegirls amongst the sheds. Then we found a place deserted and silent. We waited there. She came. She came running along the shore, rapid and leaving no trace, like a leaf driven by the wind into the sea. My brother said gloomily, 'Go and take her; carry her into our boat.' I lifted her in my arms. She panted. Her heart was beating against my breast. I said, 'I take you from those people. You came to the cry of my heart, but my arms take you into my boat against the will of the great!' 'It is right,' said my brother. 'We are men who take what we want and can hold it against many. We should have taken her in daylight.' I said, 'Let us be off'; for since she was in my boat I began to think of our Ruler's many men. 'Yes. Let us be off,' said my brother. 'We are cast out and this boat is our country now—and the sea is our refuge.' He lingered with his foot on the shore, and I entreated him to hasten, for I remembered the strokes of her heart against my breast and thought that two men cannot withstand a hundred. We left, paddling downstream close to the bank; and as we passed by the creek where they were fishing, the great shouting had ceased, but the murmur of voices was loud like the humming of insects flying at noonday. The boats floated, clustered together, in the red light of torches, under a black roof of smoke; and men talked of their sport. Men that boasted, and praised,

and jeered—men that would have been our friends in the morning, but on that night were already our enemies. We paddled swiftly past. We had no more friends in the country of our birth. She sat in the middle of the canoe with covered face; silent as she is now; unseeing as she is now—and I had no regret at what I was leaving because I could hear her breathing close to me—as I can hear her now.”

He paused, listened, with his ear turned to the doorway, then shook his head and went on

“My brother wanted to shout the cry of challenge—one cry only—to let the people know we were freeborn robbers who trusted our arms and the great sea. And again I begged him in the name of our love to be silent. Could I not hear her breathing close to me? I knew the pursuit would come quick enough. My brother loved me. He dipped his paddle without a splash. He only said, ‘There is half a man in you now—the other half is in that woman. I can wait. When you are a whole man again, you will come back with me here to shout defiance. We are sons of the same mother.’ I made no answer. All my strength and all my spirit were in my hands that held the paddle—for I longed to be with her in a safe place beyond the reach of men’s anger and of women’s spite. My love was so great, that I thought it could guide me to a country where death was unknown, if I could only escape from Inchi Midah’s fury and from our Ruler’s sword. We paddled with haste, breathing through our teeth. The blades bit deep into the smooth water. We passed out of the river, we flew in clear channels amongst the shallows. We skirted the black coast; we skirted the sand beaches where the sea speaks in whispers to the land, and the gleam of white sand flashed back past our boat, so swiftly she ran upon the water. We spoke not. Only once I said, ‘Sleep, Diamelen, for soon you may want all your strength.’ I heard the sweetness of her voice, but I never turned my head. The sun rose and still we went on. Water fell from my face like rain from a cloud. We flew in the light and heat. I never looked back, but I knew that my brother’s eyes, behind me, were looking steadily ahead, for the boat went as straight as a bushman’s dart, when it leaves the end of the sumpitan. There was no better paddler, no better steersman than my brother. Many times, together, we had won races in that canoe. But we never had put out our strength as we did then—then, when for the last time we paddled together! There was no braver or stronger man in our country than my brother. I could not spare the strength to turn my head and look at him, but every moment I heard the hiss of his breath getting louder behind me. Still he did not speak. The sun was high. The heat clung to my back like a flame of fire. My ribs were ready to burst, but I could no longer get enough air into my chest. And then I felt I must cry out with my last breath, ‘Let us rest!’ . . . ‘Good!’ he answered; and

his voice was firm. He was strong. He was brave. He knew not fear and no fatigue . . . My brother!"

A murmur powerful and gentle, a murmur vast and faint; the murmur of trembling leaves, of stirring boughs, ran through the tangled depths of the forests, ran over the starry smoothness of the lagoon, and the water between the piles lapped the slimy timber once with a sudden splash. A breath of warm air touched the two men's faces and passed on with a mournful sound—a breath loud and short like an uneasy sigh of the dreaming earth.

Arsat went on in an even, low voice.

"We ran our canoe on the white beach of a little bay close to a long tongue of land that seemed to bar our road; a long wooded cape going far into the sea. My brother knew that place. Beyond the cape a river has its entrance, and through the jungle of that land there is a narrow path. We made a fire and cooked rice. Then we lay down to sleep on the soft sand in the shade of our canoe, while she watched. No sooner had I closed my eyes than I heard her cry of alarm. We leaped up. The sun was halfway down the sky already, and coming in sight in the opening of the bay we saw a prau manned by many paddlers. We knew it at once; it was one of our Rajah's praus. They were watching the shore, and saw us. They beat the gong, and turned the head of the prau into the bay. I felt my heart become weak within my breast. Diamelen sat on the sand and covered her face. There was no escape by sea. My brother laughed. He had the gun you had given him, Tuan, before you went away, but there was only a handful of powder. He spoke to me quickly: 'Run with her along the path. I shall keep them back, for they have no firearms, and landing in the face of a man with a gun is certain death for some. Run with her. On the other side of that wood there is a fisherman's house—and a canoe. When I have fired all the shots I will follow. I am a great runner, and before they can come up we shall be gone. I will hold out as long as I can, for she is but a woman—that can neither run nor fight, but she has your heart in her weak hands.' He dropped behind the canoe. The prau was coming. She and I ran, and as we rushed along the path I heard shots. My brother fired—once—twice—and the booming of the gong ceased. There was silence behind us. That neck of land is narrow. Before I heard my brother fire the third shot I saw the shelving shore, and I saw the water again; the mouth of a broad river. We crossed a grassy glade. We ran down to the water. I saw a low hut above the black mud, and a small canoe hauled up. I heard another shot behind me. I thought, 'That is his last charge.' We rushed down to the canoe; a man came running from the hut, but I leaped on him, and we rolled together in the mud. Then I got up, and he lay still at my feet. I don't know whether I had killed him or not. I and Diamelen

pushed the canoe afloat I heard yells behind me, and I saw my brother run across the glade. Many men were bounding after him I took her in my arms and threw her into the boat, then leaped in myself When I looked back I saw that my brother had fallen. He fell and was up again, but the men were closing round him He shouted, 'I am coming!' The men were close to him. I looked. Many men Then I looked at her. Tuan, I pushed the canoe! I pushed it into deep water. She was kneeling forward looking at me, and I said, 'Take your paddle,' while I struck the water with mine Tuan, I heard him cry. I heard him cry my name twice, and I heard voices shouting, 'Kill! Strike!' I never turned back I heard him calling my name again with a great shriek, as when life is going out together with the voice—and I never turned my head. My own name! . . . My brother! Three times he called—but I was not afraid of life. Was she not there in that canoe? And could I not with her find a country where death is forgotten—where death is unknown!"

The white man sat up Arsat rose and stood, an indistinct and silent figure above the dying embers of the fire. Over the lagoon a mist drifting and low had crept, erasing slowly the glittering images of the stars. And now a great expanse of white vapour covered the land it flowed cold and gray in the darkness, eddied in noiseless whirls round the tree-trunks and about the platform of the house, which seemed to float upon a restless and impalpable illusion of a sea. Only far away the tops of the trees stood outlined on the twinkle of heaven, like a sombre and forbidding shore—a coast deceptive, pitiless and black

Arsat's voice vibrated loudly in the profound peace.

"I had her there! I had her! To get her I would have faced all mankind. But I had her—and—"

His words went out ringing into the empty distances. He paused, and seemed to listen to them dying away very far—beyond help and beyond recall. Then he said quietly—

"Tuan, I loved my brother."

A breath of wind made him shiver. High above his head, high above the silent sea of mist the drooping leaves of the palms rattled together with a mournful and expiring sound. The white man stretched his legs. His chin rested on his chest, and he murmured sadly without lifting his head—

"We all love our brothers"

Arsat burst out with an intense whispering violence—

"What did I care who died? I wanted peace in my own heart."

He seemed to hear a stir in the house—listened—then stepped in noiselessly The white man stood up. A breeze was coming in fitful puffs. The stars shone paler as if they had retreated into the frozen depths of immense space. After a chill gust of wind there were a



few seconds of perfect calm and absolute silence. Then from behind the black and wavy line of the forests a column of golden light shot up into the heavens and spread over the semicircle of the eastern horizon. The sun had risen. The mist lifted, broke into drifting patches, vanished into thin flying wreaths, and the unveiled lagoon lay, polished and black, in the heavy shadows at the foot of the wall of trees. A white eagle rose over it with a slanting and ponderous flight, reached the clear sunshine and appeared dazzlingly brilliant for a moment, then soaring higher, became a dark and motionless speck before it vanished into the blue as if it had left the earth forever. The white man, standing gazing upwards before the doorway, heard in the hut a confused and broken murmur of distracted words ending with a loud groan. Suddenly Arsat stumbled out with outstretched hands, shivered, and stood still for some time with fixed eyes. Then he said—

“She burns no more.”

Before his face the sun showed its edge above the tree-tops rising steadily. The breeze freshened, a great brilliance burst upon the lagoon, sparkled on the rippling water. The forests came out of the clear shadows of the morning, became distinct, as if they had rushed nearer—to stop short in a great stir of leaves, of nodding boughs, of swaying branches. In the merciless sunshine the whisper of unconscious life grew louder, speaking in an incomprehensible voice round the dumb darkness of that human sorrow. Arsat’s eyes wandered slowly, then stared at the rising sun.

“I can see nothing,” he said half aloud to himself.

“There is nothing,” said the white man, moving to the edge of the platform and waving his hand to his boat. A shout came faintly over the lagoon and the sampan began to glide towards the abode of the friend of ghosts.

“If you want to come with me, I will wait all the morning,” said the white man, looking away upon the water.

“No, Tuan,” said Arsat, softly. “I shall not eat or sleep in this house, but I must first see my road. Now I can see nothing—see nothing! There is no light and no peace in the world; but there is death—death for many. We are sons of the same mother—and I left him in the midst of enemies; but I am going back now.”

He drew a long breath and went on in a dreamy tone.

“In a little while I shall see clear enough to strike—to strike. But she has died, and . . . now . . . darkness.”

He flung his arms wide open, let them fall along his body, then stood still with unmoved face and stony eyes, staring at the sun. The white man got down into his canoe. The polers ran smartly along the sides of the boat, looking over their shoulders at the beginning of a weary journey. High in the stern, his head muffled up in white rags,

the juragan sat moody, letting his paddle trail in the water. The white man, leaning with both arms over the grass roof of the little cabin, looked back at the shining ripple of the boat's wake. Before the sampan passed out of the lagoon into the creek he lifted his eyes. Arsat had not moved. He stood lonely in the searching sunshine; and he looked beyond the great light of a cloudless day into the darkness of a world of illusions.

# OF THIS TIME, OF THAT PLACE

LIONEL TRILLING



It was a fine September day By noon it would be summer again but now it was true autumn with a touch of chill in the air. As Joseph Howe stood on the porch of the house in which he lodged, ready to leave for his first class of the year, he thought with pleasure of the long indoor days that were coming. It was a moment when he could feel glad of his profession.

On the lawn the peach tree was still in fruit and young Hilda Aiken was taking a picture of it She held the camera tight against her chest. She wanted the sun behind her but she did not want her own long morning shadow in the foreground. She raised the camera but that did not help, and she lowered it but that made things worse. She twisted her body to the left, then to the right. In the end she had to step out of the direct line of the sun. At last she snapped the shutter and wound the film with intense care.

Howe, watching her from the porch, waited for her to finish and called good morning. She turned, startled, and almost sullenly lowered her glance. In the year Howe had lived at the Aikens', Hilda had accepted him as one of her family, but since his absence of the summer she had grown shy. Then suddenly she lifted her head and smiled at him, and the humorous smile confirmed his pleasure in the day. She picked up her bookbag and set off for school.

The handsome houses on the streets to the college were not yet

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fully awake but they looked very friendly. Howe went by the Bradby house where he would be a guest this evening at the first dinner-party of the year. When he had gone the length of the picket fence, the whitest in town, he turned back. Along the path there was a fine row of asters and he went through the gate and picked one for his button-hole. The Bradbys would be pleased if they happened to see him invading their lawn and the knowledge of this made him even more comfortable.

He watched the campus as the hour was striking. The students were hurrying to their classes. He himself was in no hurry. He stopped at his dim cubicle of an office and lit a cigarette. The prospect of facing his class had suddenly presented itself to him and his hands were cold, the lawful seizure of power he was about to make seemed momentous. Waiting did not help. He put out his cigarette, picked up a pad of theme paper and went to his classroom.

As he entered, the rattle of voices ceased and the twenty-odd freshmen settled themselves and looked at him appraisingly. Their faces seemed gross, his heart sank at their massed impassivity, but he spoke briskly.

"My name is Howe," he said and turned and wrote it on the blackboard. The carelessness of the scrawl confirmed his authority. He went on, "My office is 412 Slemp Hall and my office-hours are Monday, Wednesday and Friday from eleven-thirty to twelve-thirty."

He wrote, "M, W, F., 11.30-12 30." He said, "I'll be very glad to see any of you at that time. Or if you can't come then, you can arrange with me for some other time."

He turned again to the blackboard and spoke over his shoulder. "The text for the course is Jarman's *Modern Plays*, revised edition. The Co-op has it in stock." He wrote the name, underlined "revised edition" and waited for it to be taken down in the new notebooks.

When the bent heads were raised again he began his speech of prospectus. "It is hard to explain—" he said, and paused as they composed themselves. "It is hard to explain what a course like this is intended to do. We are going to try to learn something about modern literature and something about prose composition."

As he spoke, his hands warmed and he was able to look directly at the class. Last year on the first day the faces had seemed just as cloddish, but as the term wore on they became gradually alive and quite likable. It did not seem possible that the same thing could happen again.

"I shall not lecture in this course," he continued. "Our work will be carried on by discussion and we will try to learn by an exchange of opinion. But you will soon recognize that my opinion is worth more than anyone else's here."

He remained grave as he said it, but two boys understood and

laughed. The rest took permission from them and laughed too. All Howe's private ironies protested the vulgarity of the joke but the laughter made him feel benign and powerful.

When the little speech was finished, Howe picked up the pad of paper he had brought. He announced that they would write an extemporaneous theme. Its subject was traditional, "Who I am and why I came to Dwight College." By now the class was more at ease and it gave a ritualistic groan of protest. Then there was a stir as fountain-pens were brought out and the writing arms of the chairs were cleared and the paper was passed about. At last all the heads bent to work and the room became still.

Howe sat idly at his desk. The sun shone through the tall clumsy windows. The cool of the morning was already passing. There was a scent of autumn and of varnish, and the stillness of the room was deep and oddly touching. Now and then a student's head was raised and scratched in the old elaborate students' pantomime that calls the teacher to witness honest intellectual effort.

Suddenly a tall boy stood within the frame of the open door. "Is this," he said, and thrust a large nose into a college catalogue, "is this the meeting place of English 1A? The section instructed by Dr. Joseph Howe?"

He stood on the very sill of the door, as if refusing to enter until he was perfectly sure of all his rights. The class looked up from work, found him absurd and gave a low mocking cheer.

The teacher and the new student, with equal pointedness, ignored the disturbance. Howe nodded to the boy, who pushed his head forward and then jerked it back in a wide elaborate arc to clear his brow of a heavy lock of hair. He advanced into the room and halted before Howe, almost at attention. In a loud clear voice he announced, "I am Tertan, Ferdinand R., reporting at the direction of Head of Department Vincent."

The heraldic formality of this statement brought forth another cheer. Howe looked at the class with a sternness he could not really feel, for there was indeed something ridiculous about this boy. Under his displeased regard the rows of heads dropped to work again. Then he touched Tertan's elbow, led him up to the desk and stood so as to shield their conversation from the class.

"We are writing an extemporaneous theme," he said. "The subject is, 'Who I am and why I came to Dwight College.'"

He stripped a few sheets from the pad and offered them to the boy. Tertan hesitated and then took the paper but he held it only tentatively. As if with the effort of making something clear, he gulped, and a slow smile fixed itself on his face. It was at once knowing and shy.

"Professor," he said, "to be perfectly fair to my classmates"—he

made a large gesture over the room—"and to you"—he inclined his head to Howe—"this would not be for me an extemporaneous subject."

Howe tried to understand "You mean you've already thought about it—you've heard we always give the same subject? That doesn't matter"

Again the boy ducked his head and gulped. It was the gesture of one who wishes to make a difficult explanation with perfect candor. "Sir," he said, and made the distinction with great care, "the topic I did not expect but I have given much ratiocination to the subject"

Howe smiled and said, "I don't think that's an unfair advantage. Just go ahead and write."

Tertan narrowed his eyes and glanced sidewise at Howe. His strange mouth smiled. Then in quizzical acceptance, he ducked his head, threw back the heavy dank lock, dropped into a seat with a great loose noise and began to write rapidly.

The room fell silent again and Howe resumed his idleness. When the bell rang, the students who had groaned when the task had been set now groaned again because they had not finished. Howe took up the papers and held the class while he made the first assignment. When he dismissed it, Tertan bore down on him, his slack mouth held ready for speech.

"Some professors," he said, "are pedants. They are Dryasdusts. However, some professors are free souls and creative spirits. Kant, Hegel and Nietzsche were all professors." With this pronouncement he paused. "It is my opinion," he continued, "that you occupy the second category."

Howe looked at the boy in surprise and said with good-natured irony, "With Kant, Hegel and Nietzsche?"

Not only Tertan's hand and head but his whole awkward body waved away the stupidity. "It is the kind and not the quantity of the kind," he said sternly.

Rebuked, Howe said as simply and seriously as he could, "It would be nice to think so." He added, "Of course I am not a professor."

This was clearly a disappointment but Tertan met it. "In the French sense," he said with composure. "Generically, a teacher."

Suddenly he bowed. It was such a bow, Howe fancied, as a stage director might teach an actor playing a medieval student who takes leave of Abelard—stiff, solemn, with elbows close to the body and feet together. Then, quite as suddenly, he turned and left.

A queer fish, and as soon as Howe reached his office he sifted through the batch of themes and drew out Tertan's. The boy had filled many sheets with his unformed headlong scrawl. "Who am I?" he had begun. "Here, in a mundane, not to say commercialized

academe, is asked the question which from time long immemorably out of mind has accreted doubts and thoughts in the psyche of man to pester him as a nuisance. Whether in St. Augustine (or Austin as sometimes called) or Miss Bashkirtseff or Frederic Amiel or Empedocles, or in less lights of the intellect than these, this posed question has been ineluctable."

Howe took out his pencil. He circled "academe" and wrote "vocab." in the margin. He underlined "time long immemorably out of mind" and wrote "Diction!" But this seemed inadequate for what was wrong. He put down his pencil and read ahead to discover the principle of error in the theme. "Today as ever, in spite of gloomy prophets of the dismal science (economics) the question is uninvalidated. Out of the starry depths of heaven hurtles this spear of query demanding to be caught on the shield of the mind ere it pierces the skull and the limbs be unstrung."

Baffled but quite caught, Howe read on. "Materialism, by which is meant the philosophic concept and not the moral idea, provides no aegis against the question which lies beyond the tangible (metaphysics). Existence without alloy is the question presented. Environment and heredity relegated aside, the rags and old clothes of practical life discarded, the name and the instrumentality of livelihood do not, as the prophets of the dismal science insist on in this connection, give solution to the interrogation which not from the professor merely but veritably from the cosmos is given. I think, therefore I am (cognito etc.) but who am I? Tertan I am, but what is Tertan? Of this time, of that place, of some parentage, what does it matter?"

Existence without alloy the phrase established itself. Howe put aside Tertan's paper and at random picked up another. "I am Arthur J. Casebeer, Jr.," he read. "My father is Arthur J. Casebeer and my grandfather was Arthur J. Casebeer before him. My mother is Nina Wimple Casebeer. Both of them are college graduates and my father is in insurance. I was born in St. Louis eighteen years ago and we still make our residence there."

Arthur J. Casebeer, who knew who he was, was less interesting than Tertan, but more coherent. Howe picked up Tertan's paper again. It was clear that none of the routine marginal comments, no "sent. str." or "punct." or "vocab." could cope with this torrential rhetoric. He read ahead, contenting himself with underscoring the errors against the time when he should have the necessary "conference" with Tertan.

It was a busy and official day of cards and sheets, arrangements and small decisions and it gave Howe pleasure. Even when it was time to attend the first of the weekly Convocations he felt the charm of the beginning of things when intention is still innocent and uncorrupted by effort. He sat among the young instructors on the platform and joined

in their humorous complaints at having to assist at the ceremony but actually he got a clear satisfaction from the ritual of prayer and prosy speech and even from wearing his academic gown. And when the Convocation was over the pleasure continued as he crossed the campus, exchanging greetings with men he had not seen since the spring. They were people who did not yet, and perhaps never would, mean much to him, but in year they had grown amiably to be part of his life. They were his fellow-townsmen.

The day had cooled again at sunset and there was a bright chill in the September twilight. Howe carried his voluminous gown over his arm, he swung his doctoral hood by its purple neckpiece and on his head he wore his mortarboard with its heavy gold tassel bobbing just over his eye. These were the weighty and absurd symbols of his new profession and they pleased him. At twenty-six Joseph Howe had discovered that he was neither so well off nor so bohemian as he had once thought. A small income, adequate when supplemented by a sizeable cash legacy, was genteel poverty when the cash was all spent. And the literary life—the room at the Lafayette or the small apartment without a lease, the long summers on the Cape, the long afternoons and the social evenings—began to weary him. His writing filled his mornings and should perhaps have filled his life, yet it did not. To the amusement of his friends and with a certain sense that he was betraying his own freedom, he had used the last of his legacy for a year at Harvard. The small but respectable reputation of his two volumes of verse had proved useful—he continued at Harvard on a fellowship and when he emerged as Dr. Howe he received an excellent appointment, with prospects, at Dwight.

He had his moments of fear when all that had ever been said of the dangers of the academic life had occurred to him. But after a year in which he had tested every possibility of corruption and seduction he was ready to rest easy. His third volume of verse, most of it written in his first year of teaching, was not only ampler but, he thought, better than its predecessors.

There was a clear hour before the Bradby dinner-party and Howe looked forward to it. But he was not to enjoy it, for lying with his mail on the hall table was a copy of this quarter's issue of *Life and Letters*, to which his landlord subscribed. Its severe cover announced that its editor, Frederic Woolley, had this month contributed an essay called "Two Poets," and Howe, picking it up, curious to see who the two poets might be, felt his own name start out at him with cabalistic power—Joseph Howe. As he continued to turn the pages his hand trembled.

Standing in the dark hall, holding the neat little magazine, Howe knew that his literary contempt for Frederic Woolley meant nothing, for he suddenly understood how he respected Woolley in the way of



the world. He knew this by the trembling of his hand. And of the little world as well as the great, for although the literary groups of New York might dismiss Woolley, his name carried high authority in the academic world. At Dwight it was even a revered name, for it had been here at the college that Frederic Woolley had made the distinguished scholarly career from which he had gone on to literary journalism. In middle life he had been induced to take the editorship of *Life and Letters*, a literary monthly not widely read but heavily endowed and in its pages he had carried on the defense of what he sometimes called the older values. He was not without wit, he had great knowledge and considerable taste and even in the full movement of the "new" literature he had won a certain respect for his refusal to accept it. In France, even in England, he would have been connected with a more robust tradition of conservatism, but America gave him an audience not much better than genteel. It was known in the college that to the subsidy of *Life and Letters* the Bradbys contributed a great part.

As Howe read, he saw that he was involved in nothing less than an event. When the Fifth Series of *Studies in Order and Value* came to be collected, this latest of Frederic Woolley's essays would not be merely another step in the old direction. Clearly and unmistakably, it was a turning point. All his literary life Woolley had been concerned with the relation of literature to mortality, religion and the private and delicate pieties and he had been unalterably opposed to all that he had called "inhuman humanitarianism." But here, suddenly, dramatically late, he had made an about-face, turning to the public life and to the humanitarian politics he had so long despised. This was the kind of incident the histories of literature make much of. Frederick Woolley was opening for himself a new career and winning a kind of new youth. He contrasted the two poets, Thomas Wormser who was admirable, Joseph Howe who was almost dangerous. He spoke of the "precious subjectivism" of Howe's verse. "In times like ours," he wrote, "with millions facing penury and want, one feels that the qualities of the *tour d'ivoire* as well-nigh inhuman, nearly insulting. The *tour d'ivoire* becomes the *tour d'ivresse* and it is not self-intoxicated poets that our people need." The essay said more: "The problem is one of meaning. I am not ignorant that the creed of the esoteric poets declares that a poem does not and should not *mean* anything, that it *is* something. But poetry is what the poet makes it, and if he is a true poet he makes what his society needs. And what is needed now is the tradition in which Mr. Wormser writes, the true tradition of poetry. The Howes do no harm, but they do no good when positive good is demanded of all responsible men. Or do the Howes indeed do no harm? Perhaps Plato would have said they do, that in some ways theirs is the Phrygian music that turns men's minds from the struggle.

Certainly it is true that Thomas Wormser writes in the lucid Dorian mode which sends men into battle with evil "

It was easy to understand why Woolley had chosen to praise Thomas Wormser. The long, lilting lines of *Corn Under Willows* hymned, as Woolley put it, the struggle for wheat in the Iowa fields and expressed the real lives of real people. But why out of the dozen more notable examples he had chosen Howe's little volume as the example of "precious subjectivism" was hard to guess. In a way it was funny, this multiplication of himself into "the Howes." And yet this becoming the multiform political symbol by whose creation Frederic Woolley gave the sign of a sudden new life, this use of him as a sacrifice whose blood was necessary for the rites of rejuvenation, made him feel oddly unclean.

Nor could Howe get rid of a certain practical resentment. As a poet he had a special and respectable place in the college life. But it might be another thing to be marked as the poet of a wilful and selfish obscurity.

As he walked to the Bradbys' Howe was a little tense and defensive. It seemed to him that all the world knew of the "attack" and agreed with it. And indeed the Bradbys had read the essay but Professor Bradby, a kind and pretentious man, said, "I see my old friend knocked you about a bit, my boy," and his wife Eugenia looked at Howe with her childlike blue eyes and said, "I shall *scold* Frederic for the untrue things he wrote about you. You aren't the least obscure." They beamed at him. In their genial snobbery they seemed to feel that he had distinguished himself. He was the leader of Howeism. He enjoyed the dinner-party as much as he had thought he would.

And in the following days, as he was more preoccupied with his duties, the incident was forgotten. His classes had ceased to be mere groups. Student after student detached himself from the mass and required or claimed a place in Howe's awareness. Of them all it was Tertan who first and most violently signalled his separate existence. A week after classes had begun Howe saw his silhouette on the frosted glass of his office door. It was motionless for a long time, perhaps stopped by the problem of whether or not to knock before entering. Howe called, "Come in!" and Tertan entered with his shambling stride.

He stood beside the desk, silent and at attention. When Howe asked him to sit down, he responded with a gesture of head and hand as if to say that such amenities were beside the point. Nevertheless he did take the chair. He put his ragged crammed briefcase between his legs. His face, which Howe now observed fully for the first time, was confusing, for it was made up of florid curves, the nose arched in the bone and voluted in the nostril, the mouth loose and soft and rather moist. Yet the face was so thin and narrow as to seem the very type

of asceticism. Lashes of unusual length veiled the eyes and, indeed, it seemed as if there were a veil over the whole countenance. Before the words actually came, the face screwed itself into an attitude of preparation for them.

"You can confer with me now?" Tertan said.

"Yes, I'd be glad to. There are several things in your two themes I want to talk to you about." Howe reached for the packet of themes on his desk and sought for Tertan's. But the boy was waving them away.

"These are done perforce," he said. "Under the pressure of your requirement. They are not significant, mere duties." Again his great hand flapped vaguely to dismiss his themes. He leaned forward and gazed at his teacher.

"You are," he said, "a man of letters? You are a poet?" It was more declaration than question.

"I should like to think so," Howe said.

At first Tertan accepted the answer with a show of appreciation, as though the understatement made a secret between himself and Howe. Then he chose to misunderstand. With his shrewd and disconcerting control of expression, he presented to Howe a puzzled grimace. "What does that mean?" he said.

Howe retracted the irony. "Yes, I am a poet." It sounded strange to say.

"That," Tertran said, "is a wonder." He corrected himself with his ducking head. "I mean that is wonderful."

Suddenly he dived at the miserable briefcase between his legs, put it on his knees and began to fumble with the catch, all intent on the difficulty it presented. Howe noted that his suit was worn thin, his shirt almost unclean. He became aware, even, of a vague and musty odor of garments worn too long in unaired rooms. Tertran conquered the lock and began to concentrate upon a search into the interior. At last he held in his hand what he was after, a torn and crumpled copy of *Life and Letters*.

"I learned it from here," he said, holding it out.

Howe looked at him sharply, his hackles a little up. But the boy's face was not only perfectly innocent, it even shone with a conscious admiration. Apparently nothing of the import of the essay had touched him except the wonderful fact that his teacher was a "man of letters." Yet this seemed too stupid and Howe, to test it, said, "The man who wrote that doesn't think it's wonderful."

Tertan made a moist hissing sound as he cleared his mouth of saliva. His head, oddly loose on his neck, wove a pattern of contempt in the air. "A critic," he said, "who admits *prima facie* that he does not understand." Then he said grandly, "It is the inevitable fate."

It was absurd, yet Howe was not only aware of the absurdity

but of a tension suddenly and wonderfully relaxed. Now that the "attack" was on the table between himself and this strange boy and subject to the boy's funny and absolutely certain contempt, the hidden force of his feeling was revealed to him in the very moment that it vanished. All unsuspected, there had been a film over the world, a transparent but discoloring haze of danger. But he had no time to stop over the brightened aspect of things. Tertan was going on. "I also am a man of letters. Putative."

"You have written a good deal?" Howe meant to be no more than polite and he was surprised at the tenderness he heard in his words.

Solemnly the boy nodded, threw back the dank lock and sucked in a deep anticipatory breath. "First, a work of homiletics, which is a defense of the principles of religious optimism against the pessimism of Schopenhauer and the humanism of Nietzsche."

"Humanism? Why do you call it humanism?"

"It is my nomenclature for making a deity of man," Tertan replied negligently. "Then three fictional works, novels. And numerous essays in science, combating materialism. Is it your duty to read these if I bring them to you?"

Howe answered simply, "No, it isn't exactly my duty but I shall be happy to read them."

Tertan stood up and remained silent. He rested his bag on the chair. With a certain compunction—for it did not seem entirely proper that, of two men of letters, one should have the right to blue-pencil the other, to grade him or to question the quality of his "sentence structure"—Howe reached for Tertan's papers. But before he could take them up, the boy suddenly made his bow-to-Abelard, the stiff inclination of the body with the hands seeming to emerge from the scholar's gown. Then he was gone.

But after his departure something was still left of him. The timbre of his curious sentences, the downright finality of so quaint a phrase as "It is the inevitable fate" still rang in the air. Howe gave the warmth of his feeling to the new visitor who stood at the door announcing himself with a genteel clearing of the throat.

"Dr. Howe, I believe?" the student said. A large hand advanced into the room and grasped Howe's hand. "Blackburn, sir, Theodore Blackburn, vice-president of the Student Council. A great pleasure, sir."

Out of a pair of ruddy cheeks a pair of small eyes twinkled good-naturedly. The large face, the large body were not so much fat as beefy and suggested something "typical," monk, politician, or inn-keeper.

Blackburn took the seat beside Howe's desk. "I may have seemed to introduce myself in my public capacity, sir," he said. "But it is

really as an individual that I came to see you. That is to say, as one of your students to be."

He spoke with an "English" intonation and he went on, "I was once an English major, sir."

For a moment Howe was startled, for the roast-beef look of the boy and the manner of his speech gave a second's credibility to one sense of his statement. Then the collegiate meaning of the phrase asserted itself, but some perversity made Howe say what was not really in good taste even with so forward a student, "Indeed? What regiment?"

Blackburn stared and then gave a little pouf-pouf of laughter. He waved the misapprehension away. "Very good, sir. It certainly is an ambiguous term." He chuckled in appreciation of Howe's joke, then cleared his throat to put it aside. "I look forward to taking your course in the romantic poets, sir," he said earnestly. "To me the romantic poets are the very crown of English literature."

Howe made a dry sound, and the boy, catching some meaning in it, said, "Little as I know them, of course. But even Shakespeare who is so dear to us of the Anglo-Saxon tradition is in a sense but the preparation for Shelley, Keats and Byron. And Wadsworth."

Almost sorry for him, Howe dropped his eyes. With some embarrassment, for the boy was not actually his student, he said softly, "Wordsworth."

"Sir?"

"Wordsworth, not Wadsworth. You said Wadsworth."

"Did I, sir?" Gravely he shook his head to rebuke himself for the error. "Wordsworth, of course—slip of the tongue." Then, quite in command again, he went on. "I have a favor to ask of you, Dr. Howe. You see, I began my college course as an English major,"—he smiled—"as I said."

"Yes?"

"But after my first year I shifted. I shifted to the social sciences. Sociology and government—I find them stimulating and very *real*." He paused, out of respect for reality. "But now I find that perhaps I have neglected the other side."

"The other side?" Howe said.

"Imagination, fancy, culture. A well rounded man." He trailed off as if there were perfect understanding between them. "And so, sir, I have decided to end my senior year with your course in the romantic poets."

His voice was filled with an indulgence which Howe ignored as he said flatly and gravely, "But that course isn't given until the spring term."

"Yes, sir, and that is where the favor comes in. Would you let me take your romantic prose course? I can't take it for credit, sir,

my program is full, but just for background it seems to me that I ought to take it. I do hope," he concluded in a manly way, "that you will consent"

"Well, it's no great favor, Mr Blackburn You can come if you wish, though there's not much point in it if you don't do the reading"

The bell rang for the hour and Howe got up

"May I begin with this class, sir?" Blackburn's smile was candid and boyish.

Howe nodded carelessly and together, silently, they walked to the classroom down the hall. When they reached the door Howe stood back to let his student enter, but Blackburn moved adroitly behind him and grasped him by the arm to urge him over the threshold. They entered together with Blackburn's hand firmly on Howe's biceps, the student inducting the teacher into his own room. Howe felt a surge of temper rise in him and almost violently he disengaged his arm and walked to the desk, while Blackburn found a seat in the front row and smiled at him

## II

The question was, At whose door must the tragedy be laid?

All night the snow had fallen heavily and only now was abating in sparse little flurries. The windows were valanced high with white. It was very quiet, something of the quiet of the world had reached the class and Howe found that everyone was glad to talk or listen. In the room there was a comfortable sense of pleasure in being human

Casebeer believed that the blame for the tragedy rested with heredity. Picking up the book he read, "The sins of the fathers are visited on their children" This opinion was received with general favor. Nevertheless Johnson ventured to say that the fault was all Pastor Manders' because the Pastor had made Mrs Alving go back to her husband and was always hiding the truth. To this Hibbard objected with logic enough, "Well, then, it was really all her husband's fault. He *did* all the bad things" De Witt, his face bright with an impatient idea, said that the fault was all society's. "By society I don't mean upper-crust society," he said. He looked around a little defiantly, taking in any members of the class who might be members of upper-crust society. "Not in that sense. I mean the social unit."

Howe nodded and said, "Yes, of course"

"If the society of the time had progressed far enough in science," De Witt went on, "then there would be no problem for Mr. Ibsen to write about Captain Alving plays around a little, gives way to perfectly natural biological urges, and he gets a social disease, a venereal disease. If the disease is cured, no problem. Invent salvarsan and the disease is cured. The problem of heredity disappears and li'l Oswald

just doesn't get paresis. No paresis, no problem—no problem, no play.”

This was carrying the ark into battle and the class looked at De Witt with respectful curiosity. It was his usual way and on the whole they were sympathetic with his struggle to prove to Howe that science was better than literature. Still, there was something in his reckless manner that alienated them a little.

“Or take birth-control, for instance,” De Witt went on. “If Mrs. Alving had some knowledge of contraception, she wouldn't have had to have li'l Oswald at all. No li'l Oswald, no play.”

The class was suddenly quieter. In the back row Stettenhover swung his great football shoulders in a righteous sulking gesture, first to the right, then to the left. He puckered his mouth ostentatiously. Intellect was always ending up by talking dirty.

Tertan's hand went up and Howe said, “Mr. Tertan.” The boy shambled to his feet and began his long characteristic gulp. Howe made a motion with his fingers, as small as possible, and Tertan ducked his head and smiled in apology. He sat down. The class laughed. With more than half the term gone, Tertan had not been able to remember that one did not rise to speak. He seemed unable to carry on the life of the intellect without this mark of respect for it. To Howe the boy's habit of rising seemed to accord with the formal shabbiness of his dress. He never wore the casual sweaters and jackets of his classmates. Into the free and comfortable air of the college classroom he brought the stuffy sordid strictness of some crowded metropolitan high school.

“Speaking from one sense,” Tertan began slowly, “there is no blame ascribable. From the sense of determinism, who can say where the blame lies? The preordained is the preordained and it cannot be said without rebellion against the universe, a palpable absurdity.”

In the back row Stettenhover slumped suddenly in his seat, his heels held out before him, making a loud dry disgusted sound. His body sank until his neck rested on the back of his chair. He folded his hands across his belly and looked significantly out of the window, exasperated not only with Tertan but with Howe, with the class, with the whole system designed to encourage this kind of thing. There was a certain insolence in the movement and Howe flushed. As Tertan continued to speak, Howe stalked casually toward the window and placed himself in the line of Stettenhover's vision. He stared at the great fellow, who pretended not to see him. There was so much power in the big body, so much contempt in the Greek-athlete face under the crisp Greek-athlete curls, that Howe felt almost physical fear. But at last Stettenhover admitted him to focus and under his disapproving gaze sat up with slow indifference. His eyebrows raised high in resignation, he began to examine his hands. Howe relaxed and turned his attention back to Tertan.

“Flux of existence,” Tertan was saying, “produces all things, so

that judgment wavers Beyond the phenomena, what? But phenomena are adumbrated and to them we are limited"

Howe saw it for a moment as perhaps it existed in the boy's mind—the world of shadows which are cast by a great light upon a hidden reality as in the old myth of the Cave But the little brush with Stettenhover had tired him and he said irritably, "But come to the point, Mr Tertan"

He said it so sharply that some of the class looked at him curiously For three months he had gently carried Tertan through his verbiages, to the vaguely respectful surprise of the other students, who seemed to conceive that there existed between this strange classmate and their teacher some special understanding from which they were content to be excluded Tertan looked at him mildly and at once came brilliantly to the point. "This is the summation of the play," he said and took up his book and read, 'Your poor father never found any outlet for the overmastering joy of life that was in him And I brought no holiday into his home, either Everything seemed to turn upon duty and I am afraid I made your poor father's home unbearable to him, Oswald' Spoken by Mrs Alving"

Yes, that was surely the "summation" of the play and Tertan had hit it, as he hit, deviously and eventually, the literary point of almost everything But now, as always, he was wrapping it away from sight "For most mortals," he said, "there are only joys of biological urgings, gross and crass, such as the sensuous Captain Alving. For certain few there are the transmutations beyond these to a contemplation of the utter whole"

Oh, the boy was mad. And suddenly the word, used in hyperbole, intended almost for the expression of exasperated admiration, became literal Now that the word was used, it became simply apparent to Howe that Tertan was mad

It was a monstrous word and stood like a bestial thing in the room Yet it so completely comprehended everything that had puzzled Howe, it so arranged and explained what for three months had been perplexing him that almost at once its horror became domesticated. With this word Howe was able to understand why he had never been able to communicate to Tertan the value of a single criticism or correction of his wild, verbose themes Their conferences had been frequent and long but had done nothing to reduce to order the splendid confusion of the boy's ideas. Yet, impossible though its expression was, Tertan's incandescent mind could always strike for a moment into some dark corner of thought.

And now it was suddenly apparent that it was not a faulty rhetoric that Howe had to contend with. With his new knowledge he looked at Tertan's face and wondered how he could have so long deceived himself. Tertan was still talking and the class had lapsed



into a kind of patient unconsciousness, a coma of respect for words which, for all that most of them knew, might be profound. Almost with a suffusion of shame, Howe believed that in some dim way the class had long ago had some intimation of Tertan's madness. He reached out as decisively as he could to seize the thread of Tertan's discourse before it should be entangled further.

"Mr. Tertan says that the blame must be put upon whoever kills the joy of living in another. We have been assuming that Captain Alving was a wholly bad man, but what if we assume that he became bad only because Mrs. Alving, when they were first married, acted toward him in the prudish way she says she did?"

It was a ticklish idea to advance to freshmen and perhaps not profitable. Not all of them were following.

"That would put the blame on Mrs. Alving herself, whom most of you admire. And she herself seems to think so." He glanced at his watch. The hour was nearly over. "What do you think, Mr. De Witt?"

De Witt rose to the idea, he wanted to know if society couldn't be blamed for educating Mrs. Alving's temperament in the wrong way. Casebeer was puzzled, Stettenhover continued to look at his hands until the bell rang.

Tertan, his brows louring in thought, was making as always for a private word. Howe gathered his books and papers to leave quickly. At this moment of his discovery and with the knowledge still raw, he could not engage himself with Tertan. Tertan sucked in his breath to prepare for speech and Howe made ready for the pain and confusion. But at that moment Casebeer detached himself from the group with which he had been conferring and which he seemed to represent. His constituency remained at a tactful distance. The mission involved the time of an assigned essay. Casebeer's presentation of the plea—it was based on the freshmen's heavy duties at the fraternities during Carnival Week—cut across Tertan's preparations for speech. "And so some of us fellows thought," Casebeer concluded with heavy solemnity, "that we could do a better job, give our minds to it more, if we had more time."

Tertan regarded Casebeer with mingled curiosity and revulsion. Howe not only said that he would postpone the assignment but went on to talk about the Carnival and even drew the waiting constituency into the conversation. He was conscious of Tertan's stern and astonished stare, then of his sudden departure.

Now that the fact was clear, Howe knew that he must act on it. His course was simple enough. He must lay the case before the Dean. Yet he hesitated. His feeling for Tertan must now, certainly, be in some way invalidated. Yet could he, because of a word, hurry to assign to official and reasonable solicitude what had been, until this moment, so various and warm? He could at least delay and, by moving

slowly, lend a poor grace to the necessary, ugly act of making his report.

It was with some notion of keeping the matter in his own hands that we went to the Dean's office to look up Tertan's records. In the outer office the Dean's secretary greeted him brightly and at his request brought him the manila folder with the small identifying photograph pasted in the corner. She laughed "He was looking for the birdie in the wrong place," she said.

Howe leaned over her shoulder to look at the picture. It was as bad as all the Dean's-office photographs were, but it differed from all that Howe had ever seen. Tertan, instead of looking into the camera, as no doubt he had been bidden, had, at the moment of exposure, turned his eyes upward. His mouth, as though conscious of the trick played on the photographer, had the sly superior look that Howe knew.

The secretary was fascinated by the picture. "What a funny boy," she said "He looks like Tartuffe!"

And so he did, with the absurd piety of the eyes and the conscious slyness of the mouth and the whole face bloated by the bad lens.

"Is he *like* that?" the secretary said.

"Like Tartuffe? No."

From the photograph there was little enough comfort to be had. The records themselves gave no clue to madness, though they suggested sadness enough. Howe read of a father, Stanislaus Tertan, born in Budapest and trained in engineering in Berlin, once employed by the Hercules Chemical Corporation—this was one of the factories that dominated the south end of the town—but now without employment. He read of a mother Erminie (Youngfellow) Tertan, born in Manchester, educated at a Normal School at Leeds, now housewife by profession. The family lived on Greenbriar Street which Howe knew as a row of once elegant homes near what was now the factory district. The old mansions had long ago been divided into small and primitive apartments. Of Ferdinand himself there was little to learn. He lived with his parents, had attended a Detroit high school and had transferred to the local school in his last year. His rating for intelligence, as expressed in numbers, was high, his scholastic record was remarkable, he held a college scholarship for his tuition.

Howe laid the folder on the secretary's desk. "Did you find what you wanted to know?" she asked.

The phrases from Tertan's momentous first theme came back to him. "Tertan I am, but what is Tertan? Of this time, of that place, of some parentage, what does it matter?"

"No, I didn't find it," he said.

Now that he had consulted the sad half-meaningless record he knew all the more firmly that he must not give the matter out of his

own hands. He must not release Tertan to authority. Not that he anticipated from the Dean anything but the greatest kindness for Tertan. The Dean would have the experience and skill which he himself could not have. One way or another the Dean could answer the question, "What is Tertan?" Yet this was precisely what he feared. He alone could keep alive—not forever but for a somehow important time—the question, "What is Tertan?" He alone could keep it still a question. Some sure instinct told him that he must not surrender the question to a clean official desk in a clear official light to be dealt with, settled and closed.

He heard himself saying, "Is the Dean busy at the moment? I'd like to see him."

His request came thus unbidden, even forbidden, and it was one of the surprising and startling incidents of his life. Later, when he reviewed the events, so disconnected in themselves or so merely odd, of the story that unfolded for him that year, it was over this moment, on its face the least notable, that he paused longest. It was frequently to be with fear and never without a certainty of its meaning in his own knowledge of himself that he would recall this simple, routine request and the feeling of shame and freedom it gave him as he sent everything down the official chute. In the end, of course, no matter what he did to "protect" Tertan, he would have had to make the same request and lay the matter on the Dean's clean desk. But it would always be a landmark of his life that, at the very moment when he was rejecting the official way, he had been, without will or intention, so gladly drawn to it.

After the storm's last delicate flurry, the sun had come out. Reflected by the new snow, it filled the office with a golden light which was almost musical in the way it made all the commonplace objects of efficiency shine with a sudden sad and noble significance. And the light, now that he noticed it, made the utterance of his perverse and unwanted request even more momentous.

The secretary consulted the engagement pad. "He'll be free any minute. Don't you want to wait in the parlor?"

She threw open the door of the large and pleasant room in which the Dean held his Committee meetings and in which his visitors waited. It was designed with a homely elegance on the masculine side of the eighteenth century manner. There was a small coal-fire in the grate and the handsome mahogany table was strewn with books and magazines. The large windows gave on the snowy lawn and there was such a fine width of window that the white casements and walls seemed at this moment but a continuation of the snow, the snow but an extension of casement and walls. The outdoors seemed taken in and made safe, the indoors seemed luxuriously freshened and expanded.

Howe sat down by the fire and lighted a cigarette. The room had

its intended effect upon him. He felt comfortable and relaxed, yet nicely organized, some young diplomatic agent of the eighteenth century, the newly fledged Swift carrying out Sir William Temple's business. The rawness of Tertan's case quite vanished. He crossed his legs and reached for a magazine.

It was that famous issue of *Life and Letters* that his idle hand had found and his blood raced as he sifted through it and the shape of his own name, Joseph Howe, sprang out at him, still cabalistic in its power. He tossed the magazine back on the table as the door of the Dean's office opened and the Dean ushered out Theodore Blackburn.

"Ah, Joseph!" the Dean said.

Blackburn said, "Good morning, Doctor." Howe winced at the title and caught the flicker of amusement over the Dean's face. The Dean stood with his hand high on the door-jamb and Blackburn, still in the doorway, remained standing almost under his long arm.

Howe nodded briefly to Blackburn, snubbing his eager deference. "Can you give me a few minutes?" he said to the Dean.

"All the time you want. Come in." Before the two men could enter the office, Blackburn claimed their attention with a long full "Er." As they turned to him, Blackburn said, "Can you give me a few minutes, Dr. Howe?" His eyes sparkled at the little audacity he had committed, the slightly impudent play with hierarchy. Of the three of them Blackburn kept himself the lowest, but he reminded Howe of his subaltern relation to the Dean.

"I mean of course," Blackburn went on easily, "when you've finished with the Dean."

"I'll be in my office shortly," Howe said, turned his back on the ready "Thank you, sir," and followed the Dean into the inner room.

"Energetic boy," said the Dean. "A bit beyond himself but very energetic. Sit down."

The Dean lighted a cigarette, leaned back in his chair, sat easy and silent for a moment, giving Howe no signal to go ahead with business. He was a young Dean, not much beyond forty, a tall handsome man with sad, ambitious eyes. He had been a Rhodes scholar. His friends looked for great things from him and it was generally said that he had notions of education which he was not yet ready to try to put into practice.

His relaxed silence was meant as a compliment to Howe. He smiled and said, "What's the business, Joseph?"

"Do you know Tertan—Ferdinand Tertan, a freshman?"

The Dean's cigarette was in his mouth and his hands were clasped behind his head. He did not seem to search his memory for the name. He said, "What about him?"

Clearly the Dean knew something and he was waiting for Howe to tell him more. Howe moved only tentatively. Now that he was

doing what he had resolved not to do, he felt more guilty at having been so long deceived by Tertan and more need to be loyal to his error.

"He's a strange fellow," he ventured. He said stubbornly, "In a strange way he's very brilliant." He concluded, "But very strange."

The springs of the Dean's swivel chair creaked as he came out of his sprawl and leaned forward to Howe. "Do you mean he's so strange that it's something you could give a name to?"

Howe looked at him stupidly. "What do you mean?" he said.

"What's his trouble?" the Dean said more neutrally.

"He's very brilliant, in a way. I looked him up and he has a top intelligence rating. But somehow, and it's hard to explain just how, what he says is always on the edge of sense and doesn't quite make it."

The Dean looked at him and Howe flushed up. The Dean had surely read Woolley on the subject of "the Howes" and the *tour d'ivresse*. Was that quick glance ironical?

The Dean picked up some papers from his desk and Howe could see that they were in Tertan's impatient scrawl. Perhaps the little gleam in the Dean's glance had come only from putting facts together.

"He sent me this yesterday," the Dean said. "After an interview I had with him. I haven't been able to do more than glance at it. When you said what you did, I realized there was something wrong."

Twisting his mouth, the Dean looked over the letter. "You seem to be involved," he said without looking up. "By the way, what did you give him at mid-term?"

Flushing, setting his shoulders, Howe said firmly, "I gave him A-minus."

The Dean chuckled. "Might be a good idea if some of our nicer boys went crazy—just a little." He said, "Well," to conclude the matter and handed the papers to Howe. "See if this is the same thing you've been finding. Then we can go into matter again."

Before the fire in the parlor, in the chair that Howe had been occupying, sat Blackburn. He sprang to his feet as Howe entered.

"I said my office, Mr. Blackburn." Howe's voice was sharp. Then he was almost sorry for the rebuke, so clearly and naively did Blackburn seem to relish his stay in the parlor, close to authority.

"I'm in a bit of a hurry, sir," he said, "and I did want to be sure to speak to you, sir."

He was really absurd, yet fifteen years from now he would have grown up to himself, to the assurance and mature beefiness. In banks, in consular offices, in brokerage firms, on the bench, more seriously affable, a little sterner, he would make use of his ability to be administered by his job. It was almost reassuring. Now he was exercising his too-great skill on Howe. "I owe you an apology, sir," he said.

Howe knew that he did but he showed surprise

"I mean, Doctor, after your having been so kind about letting me attend your class, I stopped coming." He smiled in deprecation. "Extra-curricular activities take up so much of my time. I'm afraid I undertook more than I could perform."

Howe had noticed the absence and had been a little irritated by it after Blackburn's elaborate plea. It was an absence that might be interpreted as a comment on the teacher. But there was only one way for him to answer. "You've no need to apologize," he said. "It's wholly your affair."

Blackburn beamed. "I'm so glad you feel that way about it, sir. I was worried you might think I had stayed away because I was influenced by—" He stopped and lowered his eyes.

Astonished, Howe said, "Influenced by what?"

"Well, by—" Blackburn hesitated and for answer pointed to the table on which lay the copy of *Life and Letters*. Without looking at it, he knew where to direct his hand. "By the unfavorable publicity, sir." He hurried on. "And that brings me to another point, sir. I am vice-president of Quill and Scroll, sir, the student literary society, and I wonder if you would address us. You could read your own poetry, sir, and defend your own point of view. It would be very interesting."

It was truly amazing. Howe looked long and cruelly into Blackburn's face, trying to catch the secret of the mind that could have conceived this way of manipulating him, this way so daring and inept—but not entirely inept—with its malice so without malignity. The face did not yield its secret. Howe smiled broadly and said, "Of course I don't think you were influenced by the unfavorable publicity."

"I'm still going to take—regularly, for credit—your romantic poets course next term," Blackburn said.

"Don't worry, my dear fellow, don't worry about it."

Howe started to leave and Blackburn stopped him with, "But about Quill, sir?"

"Suppose we wait until next term? I'll be less busy then."

And Blackburn said, "Very good, sir, and thank you."

In his office the little encounter seemed less funny to Howe, was even in some indeterminate way disturbing. He made an effort to put it from his mind by turning to what was sure to disturb him more, the Tertan letter read in the new interpretation. He found what he had always found, the same florid leaps beyond fact and meaning, the same headlong certainty. But as his eye passed over the familiar scrawl it caught his own name and for the second time that hour he felt the race of his blood.

"The Paraclete," Tertan had written to the Dean, "from a Greek word meaning to stand in place of, but going beyond the primitive idea to mean traditionally the helper, the one who comforts and assists,

cannot without fundamental loss be jettisoned. Even if taken no longer in the supernatural sense, the concept remains deeply in the human consciousness inevitably. Humanitarianism is no reply, for not every man stands in the place of every other man for this other's comrade comfort. But certain are chosen out of the human race to be the consoler of some other. Of these, for example, is Joseph Barker Howe, Ph.D. Of intellects not the first yet of true intellect and lambent instructions, given to that which is intuitive and irrational, not to what is logical in the strict word, what is judged by him is of the heart and not the head. Here is one chosen, in that he chooses himself to stand in the place of another for comfort and consolation. To him more than another I give my gratitude, with all respect to our Dean who reads this, a noble man, but merely dedicated, not consecrated. But not in the aspect of the Paraclete only is Dr. Joseph Barker Howe established, for he must be the Paraclete to another aspect of himself, that which is driven and persecuted by the lack of understanding in the world at large, so that he in himself embodies the full history of man's tribulations and, overflowing upon others, notably the present writer, is the ultimate end."

This was love. There was no escape from it. Try as Howe might to remember that Tertan was mad and all his emotions invalidated, he could not destroy the effect upon him of his student's stern, affectionate regard. He had betrayed not only a power of mind but a power of love. And however firmly he held before his attention the fact of Tertan's madness, he could do nothing to banish the physical sensation of gratitude he felt. He had never thought of himself as "driven and persecuted" and he did not now. But still he could not make meaningless his sensation of gratitude. The pitiable Tertan sternly pitied him, and comfort came from Tertan's never-to-be-comforted mind.

### III.

In an academic community, even an efficient one, official matters move slowly. The term drew to a close with no action in the case of Tertan, and Joseph Howe had to confront a curious problem. How should he grade his strange student, Tertan?

Tertan's final examination had been no different from all his other writing, and what did one "give" such a student? De Witt must have his A, that was clear. Johnson would get a B. With Casebeer it was a question of a B-minus or a C-plus, and Stettenhover, who had been crammed by the team tutor to fill half a blue-book with his thin feminine scrawl, would have his C-minus which he would accept with mingled indifference and resentment. But with Tertan it was not so easy.

The boy was still in the college process and his name could not be

omitted from the grade sheet. Yet what should a mind under suspicion of madness be graded? Until the medical verdict was given, it was for Howe to continue as Tertan's teacher and to keep his judgment pedagogical. Impossible to give him an F—he had not failed. B was for Johnson's stolid mediocrity. He could not be put on the edge of passing with Stettenhover, for he exactly did not pass. In energy and richness of intellect he was perhaps even De Witt's superior, and Howe toyed grimly with the notion of giving him an A, but that would lower the value of the A De Witt had won with his beautiful and clear, if still arrogant, mind. There was a notation which the Registrar recognized—Inc for Incomplete and in the horrible comedy of the situation, Howe considered that. But really only a mark of M for Mad would serve.

In his perplexity, Howe sought the Dean, but the Dean was out of town. In the end, he decided to maintain the A-minus he had given Tertan at midterm. After all, there had been no falling away from that quality. He entered it on the grade sheet with something like bravado.

Academic times moves quickly. A college year is not really a year, lacking as it does three months. And it is endlessly divided into units which, at their beginning, appear larger than they are—terms, half-terms, months, weeks. And the ultimate unit, the hour, is not really an hour, lacking as it does ten minutes. And so the new term advanced rapidly and one day the fields about the town were all brown, cleared of even the few thin patches of snow which had lingered so long.

Howe, as he lectured on the romantic poets, became conscious of Blackburn emanating wrath. Blackburn did it well, did it with enormous dignity. He did not stir in his seat, he kept his eyes fixed on Howe in perfect attention, but he abstained from using his notebook, there was no mistaking what he proposed to himself as an attitude. His elbow on the writing-wing of the chair, his chin on the curled fingers of his hand, he was the embodiment of intellectual indignation. He was thinking his own thoughts, would give no public offence, yet would claim his due, was not to be intimidated. Howe knew that he would present himself at the end of the hour.

Blackburn entered the office without invitation. He did not smile, there was no cajolery about him. Without invitation he sat down beside Howe's desk. He did not speak until he had taken the blue-book from his pocket. He said, "What does this mean, sir?"

It was a sound and conservative student tactic. Said in the usual way it meant, "How could you have so misunderstood me?" or "What does this mean for my future in the course?" But there were none of the humbler tones in Blackburn's way of saying it.

Howe made the established reply, "I think that's for you to tell me."

Blackburn continued icy. "I'm sure I can't, sir."



There was a silence between them. Both dropped their eyes to the blue-book on the desk. On its cover Howe had pencilled "F This is very poor work."

Howe picked up the blue-book. There was always the possibility of injustice. The teacher may be bored by the mass of papers and not wholly attentive. A phrase, even the student's handwriting, may irritate him unreasonably. "Well," said Howe, "let's go through it."

He opened the first page. "Now here you write, 'In 'The Ancient Mariner,' Coleridge lives in and transports us to a honey-sweet world where all is rich and strange, a world of charm to which we can escape from the humdrum existence of our daily lives, the world of romance. Here, in this warm and honey-sweet land of charming dreams we can relax and enjoy ourselves.'"

Howe lowered the paper and waited with a neutral look for Blackburn to speak. Blackburn returned the look boldly, did not speak, sat stolid and lofty. At last Howe said, speaking gently, "Did you mean that, or were you just at a loss for something to say?"

"You imply that I was just 'bluffing'?" The quotation marks hung palpable in the air about the word.

"I'd like to know. I'd prefer believing that you were bluffing to believing that you really thought this."

Blackburn's eyebrows went up. From the height of a great and firm-based idea he looked at his teacher. He clasped the crags for a moment and then pounced, craftily, suavely. "Do you mean, Dr. Howe, that there aren't two opinions possible?"

It was superbly done in its air of putting all of Howe's intellectual life into the balance. Howe remained patient and simple. "Yes, many opinions are possible, but not this one. Whatever anyone believes of 'The Ancient Mariner,' no one can in reason believe that it represents a—a honey-sweet world in which we can relax."

"But that is what I *feel*, sir."

This was well done too. Howe said, "Look, Mr. Blackburn. Do you really relax with hunger and thirst, the heat and the sea-serpents, the dead men with staring eyes, Life in Death and the skeletons? Come now, Mr. Blackburn."

Blackburn made no answer and Howe pressed forward. "Now you say of Wordsworth, 'Of peasant stock himself, he turned from the effete life of the salons and found in the peasant the hope of a flaming revolution which would sweep away all the old ideas. This is the subject of his best poems.'"

Beaming at his teacher with youthful eagerness, Blackburn said, "Yes, sir, a rebel, a bringer of light to suffering mankind. I see him as a kind of Prothemeus."

"A kind of what?"

"Prothemeus, sir."

"Think, Mr. Blackburn. We were talking about him only today and I mentioned his name a dozen times. You don't mean Prothemus. You mean—" Howe waited but there was no response.

"You mean Prometheus."

Blackburn gave no assent and Howe took the reins. "You've done a bad job here, Mr. Blackburn, about as bad as could be done" He saw Blackburn stiffen and his genial face harden again. "It shows either a lack of preparation or a complete lack of understanding." He saw Blackburn's face begin to go to pieces and he stopped

"Oh, sir," Blackburn burst out, "I've never had a mark like this before, never anything below a B, never. A thing like this has never happened to me before."

It must be true, it was a statement too easily verified. Could it be that other instructors accepted such flaunting nonsense? Howe wanted to end the interview. "I'll set it down to lack of preparation," he said. "I know you're busy. That's not an excuse but it's an explanation. Now suppose you really prepare and then take another quiz in two weeks. We'll forget this one and count the other."

Blackburn squirmed with pleasure and gratitude. "Thank you, sir. You're really very kind, very kind."

Howe rose to conclude the visit. "All right then—in two weeks."

It was that day that the Dean imparted to Howe the conclusion of the case of Tertan. It was simple and a little anticlimactic. A physician had been called in, and had said the word, given the name

"A classic case, he called it," the Dean said. "Not a doubt in the world," he said. His eyes were full of miserable pity and he clutched at a word. "A classic case, a classic case." To his aid and to Howe's there came the Parthenon and the form of the Greek drama, the Aristotelian logic, Racine and the Well-Tempered Clavichord, the blueness of the Aegean and its clear sky. Classic—that is to say, without a doubt, perfect in its way, a veritable model, and, as the Dean had been told, sure to take a perfectly predictable and inevitable course to a fore-known conclusion.

It was not only pity that stood in the Dean's eyes. For a moment there was fear too. "Terrible," he said, "it is simply terrible."

Then he went on briskly. "Naturally we've told the boy nothing. And naturally we won't. His tuition's paid by his scholarship and we'll continue him on the rolls until the end of the year. That will be kindest. After that the matter will be out of our control. We'll see, of course, that he gets into the proper hands. I'm told there will be no change, he'll go on like this, be as good as this, for four to six months. And so we'll just go along as usual."

So Tertan continued to sit in Section 5 of English 1A to his classmates still a figure of curiously dignified fun, symbol to most of them of the respectable but absurd intellectual life. But to his teacher

he was now very different. He had not changed—he was still the greyhound casting for the scent of ideas and Howe could see that he was still the same Tertan, but he could not feel it. What he felt as he looked at the boy sitting in his accustomed place was the hard blank of a fact. The fact itself was formidable and depressing. But what Howe was chiefly aware of was that he had permitted the metamorphosis of Tertan from person to fact.

As much as possible he avoided seeing Tertan's upraised hand and eager eye. But the fact did not know of its mere factuality, it continued its existence as if it were Tertan, hand up and eye questioning, and one day it appeared in Howe's office with a document.

"Even the spirit who lives egregiously, above the herd, must have its relations with the fellowman," Tertan declared. He laid the document on Howe's desk. It was headed "Quill and Scroll Society of Dwight College. Application for Membership."

"In most ways these are crass minds," Tertan said, touching the paper. "Yet as a whole, bound together in their common love of letters, they transcend their intellectual lacks since it is not a paradox that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts."

"When are the elections?" Howe asked.

"They take place tomorrow."

"I certainly hope you will be successful."

"Thank you. Would you wish to implement that hope?" A rather dirty finger pointed to the bottom of the sheet. "A faculty recommender is necessary," Tertan said stiffly, and waited.

"And you wish me to recommend you?"

"It would be an honor."

"You may use my name."

Tertan's finger pointed again. "It must be a written sponsorship, signed by the sponsor." There was a large blank space on the form under the heading, "Opinion of Faculty Sponsor."

This was almost another thing and Howe hesitated. Yet there was nothing else to do and he took out his fountain pen. He wrote, "Mr. Ferdinand Tertan is marked by his intense devotion to letters and by his exceptional love of all things of the mind." To this he signed his name which looked bold and assertive on the white page. It disturbed him, the strange affirming power of a name. With a business-like air, Tertan whipped up the paper, folded it with decision and put it into his pocket. He bowed and took his departure, leaving Howe with the sense of having done something oddly momentous.

And so much now seemed odd and momentous to Howe that should not have seemed so. It was odd and momentous, he felt, when he sat with Blackburn's second quiz before him and wrote in an excessively firm hand the grade of C-minus. The paper was a clear, an indisputable failure. He was carefully and consciously committing a

cowardice Blackburn had told the truth when he had pleaded his past record Howe had consulted it in the Dean's office. It showed no grade lower than a B-minus. A canvass of some of Blackburn's previous instructors had brought vague attestations to the adequate powers of a student imperfectly remembered and sometimes surprise that his abilities could be questioned at all.

As he wrote the grade, Howe told himself that his cowardice sprang from an unwillingness to have more dealings with a student he disliked. He knew it was simpler than that. He knew he feared Blackburn—that was the absurd truth. And cowardice did not solve the matter after all. Blackburn, flushed with a first success, attacked at once. The minimal passing grade had not assuaged his feelings and he sat at Howe's desk and again the blue-book lay between them. Blackburn said nothing. With an enormous impudence, he was waiting for Howe to speak and explain himself.

At last Howe said sharply and rudely, "Well?" His throat was tense and the blood was hammering in his head. His mouth was tight with anger at himself for his disturbance.

Blackburn's glance was almost baleful. "This is impossible, sir."

"But there it is," Howe answered.

"Sir?" Blackburn had not caught the meaning but his tone was still haughty.

Impatiently Howe said, "There it is, plain as day. Are you here to complain again?"

"Indeed I am, sir." There was surprise in Blackburn's voice that Howe should ask the question.

"I shouldn't complain if I were you. You did a thoroughly bad job on your first quiz. This one is a little, only a very little, better." This was not true. If anything, it was worse.

"That might be a matter of opinion, sir."

"It is a matter of opinion. Of my opinion."

"Another opinion might be different, sir."

"You really believe that?" Howe said.

"Yes." The omission of the "sir" was monumental.

"Whose, for example?"

"The Dean's, for example." Then the fleshy jaw came forward a little. "Or a certain literary critic's, for example."

It was colossal and almost too much for Blackburn himself to handle. The solidity of his face almost crumpled under it. But he withstood his own audacity and went on. "And the Dean's opinion might be guided by the knowledge that the person who gave me this mark is the man whom a famous critic, the most eminent judge of literature in this country, called a drunken man. The Dean might think twice about whether such a man is fit to teach Dwight students."

Howe said in quiet admonition, "Blackburn, you're mad," meaning no more than to check the boy's extravagance.

But Blackburn paid no heed. He had another shot in the locker. "And the Dean might be guided by the information, of which I have evidence, documentary evidence,"—he slapped his breastpocket twice—"that this same person personally recommended to the college literary society, the oldest in the country, that he personally recommended a student who is crazy, who threw the meeting into an uproar, a psychiatric case. The Dean might take that into account."

Howe was never to learn the details of that "uproar." He had always to content himself with the dim but passionate picture which at that moment sprang into his mind, of Tertan standing on some abstract height and madly denouncing the multitude of Quill and Scroll who howled him down.

He sat quiet a moment and looked at Blackburn. The ferocity had entirely gone from the student's face. He sat regarding his teacher almost benevolently. He had played a good card and now, scarcely at all unfriendly, he was waiting to see the effect. Howe took up the blue-book and negligently sifted through it. He read a page, closed the book, struck out the C-minus and wrote an F.

"Now you may take the paper to the Dean," he said. "You may tell him that after reconsidering it, I lowered the grade."

The gasp was audible. "Oh sir!" Blackburn cried. "Please!" His face was agonized. "It means my graduation, my livelihood, my future. Don't do this to me."

"It's done already."

Blackburn stood up. "I spoke rashly, sir, hastily. I had no intention, no real intention, of seeing the Dean. It rests with you—entirely, entirely. I *hope* you will restore the first mark."

"Take the matter to the Dean or not, just as you choose. The grade is what you deserve and it stands."

Blackburn's head dropped. "And will I be failed at midterm, sir?"

"Of course."

From deep out of Blackburn's great chest rose a cry of anguish. "Oh sir, if you want me to go down on my knees to you, I will, I will."

Howe looked at him in amazement.

"I will, I will. On my knees, sir. This mustn't, mustn't happen."

He spoke so literally, meaning so very truly that his knees and exactly his knees were involved and seeming to think that he was offering something of tangible value to his teacher, that Howe, whose head had become icy clear in the nonsensical drama, thought, "The boy is mad," and began to speculate fantastically whether something in himself attracted or developed aberration. He could see himself

standing absurdly before the Dean and saying, "I've found another. This time it's the Vice-president of the Council, the manager of the debating team and secretary of Quill and Scroll "

One more such discovery, he thought, and he himself would be discovered! And there, suddenly, Blackburn was on his knees with a thump, his huge thighs straining his trousers, his hand outstretched in a great gesture of supplication

With a cry, Howe shoved back his swivel chair and it rolled away on its casters half across the little room Blackburn knelt for a moment to nothing at all, then got to his feet.

Howe rose abruptly He said, "Blackburn, you will stop acting like an idiot Dust your knees off, take your paper and get out. You've behaved like a fool and a malicious person You have half a term to do a decent job Keep your silly mouth shut and try to do it. Now get out "

Blackburn's head was low He raised it and there was a pious light in his eyes "Will you shake hands, sir?" he said He thrust out his hand

"I will not," Howe said.

Head and hand sank together Blackburn picked up his blue-book and walked to the door He turned and said, "Thank you, sir." His back, as he departed, was heavy with tragedy and stateliness

#### IV

After years of bad luck with the weather, the College had a perfect day for Commencement It was wonderfully bright, the air so transparent, the wind so brisk that no one could resist talking about it

As Howe set out for the campus he heard Hilda calling from the back yard She called, "Professor, professor," and came running to him

Howe said, "What's this 'professor' business?"

"Mother told me," Hilda said "You've been promoted. And I want to take your picture."

"Next year," said Howe. "I won't be a professor until next year. And you know better than to call anybody 'professor'."

"It was just in fun " Hilda said She seemed disappointed

"But you can take my picture if you want. I won't look much different next year " Still, it was frightening. It might mean that he was to stay in this town all his life.

Hilda brightened. "Can I take it in this?" she said, and touched the gown he carried over his arm

Howe laughed. "Yes, you can take it in this."

"I'll get my things and meet you in front of Otis," Hilda said. "I have the background all picked out."

On the campus the Commencement crowd was already large. It

stood about in eager, nervous little family groups. As he crossed, Howe was greeted by a student, capped and gowned, glad of the chance to make an event for his parents by introducing one of his teachers. It was while Howe stood there chatting that he saw Tertan.

He had never seen anyone quite so alone, as though a circle had been woven about him to separate him from the gay crowd on the campus. Not that Tertan was not gay, he was the gayest of all. Three weeks had passed since Howe had last seen him, the weeks of examination, the lazy week before Commencement, and this was now a different Tertan. On his head he wore a panama hat, broadbrimmed and fine, of the shape associated with South American planters. He wore a suit of raw silk, luxurious but yellowed with age and much too tight, and he sported a whangee cane. He walked sedately, the hat tilted at a devastating angle, the stick coming up and down in time to his measured tread. He had, Howe guessed, outfitted himself to greet the day in the clothes of that ruined father whose existence was on record in the Dean's office. Gravely and arrogantly he surveyed the scene—in it, his whole bearing seemed to say, but not of it. With his haughty step, with his flashing eye, Tertan was coming nearer. Howe did not wish to be seen. He shifted his position slightly. When he looked again, Tertan was not in sight.

The chapel clock struck the quarter hour. Howe detached himself from his chat and hurried to Otis Hall at the far end of the campus. Hilda had not yet come. He went up into the high portico and, using the glass of the door for a mirror, put on his gown, adjusted the hood on his shoulders and set the mortarboard on his head. When he came down the steps Hilda had arrived.

Nothing could have told him more forcibly that a year had passed than the development of Hilda's photographic possessions from the the box camera of the previous fall. By a strap about her neck was hung a leather case, so thick and strong, so carefully stitched and so molded to its contents that it could only hold a costly camera. The appearance was deceptive, Howe knew, for he had been present at the Aikens' pre-Christmas conference about its purchase. It was only a fairly good domestic camera. Still, it looked very impressive. Hilda carried another leather case from which she drew a collapsible tripod. Decisively she extended each of its gleaming legs and set it up on the path. She removed the camera from its case and fixed it to the tripod. In its compact efficiency the camera almost had a life of its own, but Hilda treated it with easy familiarity, looked into its eye, glanced casually at its gauges. Then from a pocket she took still another leather case and drew from it a small instrument through which she looked first at Howe, who began to feel inanimate and lost, and then at the sky. She made some adjustment on the instrument, then some adjustment on the camera. She swept the scene with her eye, found

a spot and pointed the camera in its direction. She walked to the spot, stood on it and beckoned to Howe. With each new leather case, with each new instrument and with each new adjustment she had grown in ease and now she said, "Joe, will you stand here?"

Obediently Howe stood where he was bidden. She had yet another instrument. She took out a tape-measure on a mechanical spool. Kneeling down before Howe, she put the little metal ring of the tape under the tip of his shoe. At her request, Howe pressed it with his toe. When she had measured her distance, she nodded to Howe who released the tape. At a touch, it sprang back into the spool. "You have to be careful if you're going to get what you want," Hilda said. "I don't believe in all this snap-snap-snapping," she remarked loftily. Howe nodded in agreement, although he was beginning to think Hilda's care excessive.

Now at last the moment had come. Hilda squinted into the camera, moved the tripod slightly. She stood to the side, holding the plunger of the shutter-cable. "Ready," she said. "Will you relax, Joseph, please?" Howe realized that he was standing frozen. Hilda stood poised and precise as a setter, one hand holding the little cable, the other extended with curled dainty fingers like a dancer's, as if expressing to her subject the precarious delicacy of the moment. She pressed the plunger and there was the click. At once she stirred to action, got behind the camera, turned a new exposure. "Thank you," she said. "Would you stand under that tree and let me do a character study with light and shade?"

The childish absurdity of the remark restored Howe's ease. He went to the little tree. The pattern the leaves made on his gown was what Hilda was after. He had just taken a satisfactory position when he heard in the unmistakable voice, "Ah, Doctor! Having your picture taken?"

Howe gave up the pose and turned to Blackburn who stood on the walk, his hands behind his back, a little too large for his bachelor's gown. Annoyed that Blackburn should see him posing for a character study in light and shade, Howe said irritably, "Yes, having my picture taken."

Blackburn beamed at Hilda. "And the little photographer," he said. Hilda fixed her eyes on the ground and stood closer to her brilliant and aggressive camera. Blackburn, teetering on his heels, his hands behind his back, wholly prelatiical and benignly patient, was not abashed at the silence. At last Howe said, "If you'll excuse us, Mr Balckburn, we'll go on with the picture."

"Go right ahead, sir. I'm running along." But he only came closer. "Dr. Howe," he said fervently, "I want to tell you how glad I am that I was able to satisfy your standards at last."

Howe was surprised at the hard insulting brightness of his own



voice and even Hilda looked up curiously as he said, "Nothing you have ever done has satisfied me and nothing you could ever do would satisfy me, Blackburn"

With a glance at Hilda, Blackburn made a gesture as if to hush Howe—as though all his former bold malice had taken for granted a kind of understanding between himself and his teacher, a secret which must not be betrayed to a third person. "I only meant, sir," he said, "that I was able to pass your course after all."

Howe said, "You didn't pass my course I passed you out of my course I passed you without even reading your paper I wanted to be sure the college would be rid of you And when all the grades were in and I did read your paper, I saw I was right not to have read it first."

Blackburn presented a stricken face. "It was very bad, sir?"

But Howe had turned away The paper had been fantastic The paper had been, if he wished to see it so, mad. It was at this moment that the Dean came up behind Howe and caught his arm "Hello, Joseph," he said "We'd better be getting along, it's almost late."

He was not a familiar man, but when he saw Blackburn, who approached to greet him, he took Blackburn's arm too. "Hello, Theodore," he said Leaning forward on Howe's arm and on Blackburn's, he said, "Hello, Hilda dear" Hilda replied quietly, "Hello, Uncle George"

Still clinging to their arms, still linking Howe and Blackburn, the Dean said, "Another year gone, Joe, and we've turned out another crop After you've been here a few years, you'll find it reasonably upsetting—you wonder how there can be so many graduating classes while you stay the same. But of course you don't stay the same." Then he said, "Well," sharply, to dismiss the thought He pulled Blackburn's arm and swung him around to Howe "Have you heard about Teddy Blackburn?" he asked. "He has a job already, before graduation, the first man of his class to be placed." Expectant of congratulations, Blackburn beamed at Howe Howe remained silent.

"Isn't that good?" the Dean said Still Howe did not answer and the Dean, puzzled and put out, turned to Hilda. "That's a very fine-looking camera, Hilda" She touched it with affectionate pride.

"Instruments of precision," said a voice. "Instruments of precision." Of the three with joined arms, Howe was the nearest to Tertan, whose gaze took in all the scene except the smile and the nod which Howe gave him The boy leaned on his cane. The broadbrimmed hat, canting jauntily over his eye, confused the image of his face that Howe had established, suppressed the rigid lines of the ascetic and brought out the baroque curves It made an effect of perverse majesty.

"Instruments of precision," said Tertan for the last time, addressing no one, making a casual comment to the universe. And it occurred

to Howe that Tertan might not be referring to Hilda's equipment. The sense of the thrice-woven circle of the boy's loneliness smote him fiercely. Tertan stood in majestic jauntiness, superior to all the scene, but his isolation made Howe ache with a pity of which Tertan was more the cause than the object, so general and indiscriminate was it.

Whether in his sorrow he made some unintended movement toward Tertan which the Dean checked or whether the suddenly tightened grip on his arm was the Dean's own sorrow and fear, he did not know. Tertan watched them in the incurious way people watch a photograph being taken and suddenly the thought that, to the boy, it must seem that the three were posing for a picture together made Howe detach himself almost rudely from the Dean's grasp.

"I promised Hilda another picture," he announced—needlessly, for Tertan was no longer there, he had vanished in the last sudden flux of visitors who, now that the band had struck up, were rushing nervously to find seats.

"You'd better hurry," the Dean said. "I'll go along, it's getting late for me." He departed and Blackburn walked stately by his side.

Howe again took his position under the little tree which cast its shadow over his face and gown. "Just hurry, Hilda, won't you?" he said. Hilda held the cable at arm's length, her other arm crooked and her fingers crisped. She rose on her toes and said "Ready," and pressed the release. "Thank you," she said gravely and began to dismantle her camera as he hurried off to join the procession.

# THE NEED

ROBERT M. COATES



Why does one remember some things so much more clearly than others—one small incident, say, standing out sharp and clear and forever immobilized in the wastes of the past, as if a spotlight struck down on it—and why are so many of them, in my own case at least, vaguely mournful or even a bit shameful in their connotation? That's not the whole truth, of course, I have my pleasanter moments to look back on, too, and many of them. But these have, as it were, a general glow that can even reach over and enliven the present, and as they are more diffuse, they are also less vivid in recollection. The sad ones, though—where one did wrong, or failed to rise to meet a situation, or met it awkwardly or ineffectually—these have something frozen and unapproachable about them. One looks back at them, so to speak, as if across a gulf, the gulf of the immutable, the fixed and forever irreparable.

I can still see, for instance, the trees in the summer dusk along Lake Avenue in Rochester and sense that special *place* atmosphere that always goes with my recollections of Rochester in the years that I lived there—of crisp northern New York State air, cool light, and a feeling of roominess and calm about every thing—on that night when I stopped to pick up Freddie Bassett for a ride to Maplewood Park, with a couple of girls we knew, to hear the weekly band concert. I was about seventeen then, in high school, and Freddie was my best friend. He was a tall, dark-haired boy, very quiet and shy, with a long, thin face and a loose-limbed, lanky body, he was moody at times, but he

played a good game of tennis and he liked to take long walks, as I did, and we got along well together. I had managed to borrow the family car for the excursion, and as the girls lived nearer to me, I had picked them up first, they were both crowded in with me in the front seat of our old Paige touring car when—with something of a flourish, I suppose—I pulled in to the curb at the corner where Freddie had said he would meet us

He was waiting there, unexpectedly spick-and-span in a neat straw hat, a blue coat, and a brand-clean pair of white flannel trousers, and—I don't know why—I felt cocky, I suppose, at having the car and exhilarated by the presence of the girls packed in beside me, perhaps, too, there were hidden jealousies involved, for Freddie was handsome in his thin, dark way, and despite his shyness the girls all liked him. At any rate, with a quick spurt of malice that surprised even me, I cried out, as I braked the car to a stop beside him, "Oh, my Lord! Look at little Freddie Bassett in his ice-cream pants!" And I added, though by now I was trying to save the situation, foolishly, by just talking through it, "What's the matter? Did your mother make you wear them?"

It was brash, it was schoolboyish, it was ungrown-up, but, even more than that, I still cringe a little, when I think of it, at the sudden look—startled, puzzled, and hurt—that Freddie gave me. No great harm was done, of course. I did spoil his evening. In those innocent, simple days, thirty years or so ago in Rochester, the park concerts were one of the townsfolk's main amusements, and a kind of gathering place for the neighborhood youngsters as well. People drove there, parking their cars in concentric rings around the bandstand, itself set in the center of a wide, slightly basin-shaped glade, and then, while the band played (Odenbach's Military Band, it was called, I remember), and moths swooped and fluttered about the brightly lit stand, and the trees sighed now and then as a breeze stirred them, people walked about, visiting from car to car, or, just strolling, circled the ring in a kind of slow promenade.

It was, in a gentle, half-bucolic, benign way, fun. And always, if a fellow was venturesome, or his girl was, there were the darker reaches of the park beyond for more intimate exploration. I think Freddie and I had had some hopeful notions in that direction when we were planning the evening. These were quashed, though, at the outset, by my remark, it had cut the ground from under him, it had robbed him of confidence, and it was difficult to get him out of the car for the ritual promenade. But I realize now that as I go on, I am robbing the incident of its value. For it was not what happened afterward that mattered. (As I've said, nothing, really, happened. No great chain of events, pernicious or otherwise, was set in motion—no career changed, no romance helped or hindered.) It was the incident itself.

the hasty, ill-considered remark—somehow charged with more jealousy, spitefulness, animosity than one had intended, and so, even to oneself, perhaps most of all to oneself, revelatory—and then the blank, hurt look, the slow flush, and the feeling of guilt, of betrayal.

The feeling, somehow, that harm has been done, but to a relationship rather than to a person, and so vague and intangible that by its very nature it can never be rectified. Walter Redinger, walking toward me down Forty-eighth Street and eying me tentatively, obviously waiting for me to greet him. That was soon after I got out of college, and Redinger, a plump, ruddy-faced man with an uneasy air of heartiness, had been fired abruptly, a short time before, from the small advertising agency where I was working—for, as far as I could make out, no other reason than that he'd in some way annoyed the head of his department. And though I'd never quite liked him, I had nothing against him, either; in fact, I had rather sympathized, for there'd been something a bit brutal about the abruptness of his dismissal, and I had said so so openly that some others had cautioned me. I might get into trouble myself, they'd said.

Yet as he approached, I felt a certain resentment rise up in me. It may be that in some queer, perverse way I felt that my support of him in the abstract in the office had absolved me from further involvement with him personally. It may be simply that with the panic intransigence of youth I just didn't want to be associated with failure—and certainly Redinger at that moment, with his rumpled brown suit and hesitant gaze (with, already, somehow, the dreary aura of the jobless about him), looked definitely a failure. At any rate, I removed my eyes quickly from his; I put on an air of preoccupation and hurry, I closed my mind to his presence (or I tried to) and walked past without speaking.

To be sure, there was almost the width of the sidewalk between us, and some traffic of people as well. I *might* not have seen him. But I'm sure he felt that I had, and was already classifying me with the people who were beginning to avoid him, for from the corner of my eye I saw his face stiffen and flush as he passed by me.

Certainly, in the case of the little man up in New Hampshire I truly didn't, until it was too late to do anything about it, see his hand. That was only a couple of years ago, when I was driving up through the White Mountains, and he ran a small roadside service station where I stopped to get gas and oil and, eventually, a gallon of maple syrup from a supply he had on display in his window. Except that he was a little short for the role, he was, to the eye, as true a New Englander as one could ask for—thin and stringily built, with a loose-muscled, quizzical face and a long, limber nose—but it turned out, as we talked, that he came from Long Island, not far from where I lived at the time.

And so we talked about Long Island, its advantages and its disadvantages, and in the end, as I was preparing to go, he held out his hand

I have said that I didn't see him do it, but in some corner of my perception I must have, for I can still remember his gesture—the shoulders squared a little, the head thrown back slightly as the eyes sought mine, the whole body beginning to arrange itself, a bit self-consciously, in the posture of formal leave-taking. But I had my wallet in one hand by that time, and a couple of bills, just extracted, in the other, and besides I was beginning to get bored with the interlude, it was time for me to be getting on

As his hand came forward for me to grasp it, I put the bills in it instead. I might have explained, of course. I might have juggled wallet and bills together and managed to meet his gesture, I might have saved the situation—as I might have done, too, years earlier, turning in the instant after Walter Redinger had passed, if I had obeyed my impulse to call after him, stop him, say hello to him. But I didn't. At the moment, it just didn't seem worthwhile.

With Mr. Shubin, unfortunately, it turned out that there was no real chance for an explanation. That was when my family, in one of its wilder peregrinations, was living in Victor, Colorado, in the Cripple Creek mining district, and Mr. Shubin, a tall, heavy-set, rather bearlike man, a Russian, with a long, drooping, melancholy black mustache and a round, gentle face, was one of the town's assayers, that is, one of the men equipped to test the mineral content of a piece of ore, and so tell a mineowner or a prospector its value. I was a small boy then, newly come from the East while my father had a more or less unprofitable fling at gold mining. Even to my young and somewhat uncritical eyes, Mr. Shubin seemed out of place in his surroundings. But then, as I look back on it now, the town differed in a good many ways from the gold camps of fiction and the movies.

It did, though, have most of the attributes: the false-fronted stores, the board sidewalks raised high above the muddy, uneven streets, the log cabins and makeshift frame houses, the donkeys everywhere, the men on horseback. A good many of the men carried revolvers, though most of these wore them discreetly under their coats. (I still remember my mother's surprise when, as newcomers, we were invited to a picnic out on Squaw Mountain, and after the lunch was over, the men in the party—sober, well-regarded citizens, all—unconcernedly took out guns and started shooting at tin cans they'd set up as targets.) Saturdays, when the cowboys rode in—for the district, one of the very few where the ground was as fertile as it was rich in minerals, raised a good deal of cattle in the valleys nearby—prudent people stayed home, and left the center of town to the brawlings and occasional shootings that resulted.

Always, too, to remind us of our remoteness, there were the big, bare hills roundabout—treeless, tawny with rock outcroppings, scarred with mine dumps and terraced with gaunt mine buildings—and surrounded, themselves, by still mightier hills seen sometimes, distant, snowy, austere, through a gap or from a high road but, seen or not, always there and known to be there, range on tumbled range of them, like a rocky and almost impenetrable barrier between us and our strange life *here* and the life in what almost everyone called “back home”

For there were very few native Coloradans in the camp, and the place (and this is the part that the movies don't mention) had its queer, shifting cosmopolitan flavor, too. Working miners had come from as far away as Sweden and Wales to get in on the bonanza, while a good many of the brawny youngsters one saw mucking out ore in the mines were fellows fresh out of Eastern colleges, who had come West to see the world as some of their classmates may have gone to Paris. English lecturers, Polish pianists, and Italian singers drifted through, and were entertained earnestly and lavishly by the ladies of the community. Some stayed. There was a former ballerina known as Miss LaFère, I remember—a tall, wandlike, sharpfaced woman who always carried a parasol when she walked out, and possessed what was probably the only poodle west of Chicago, who had come to give a recital and remained to open a dancing school, and there was a squat, bushy-haired, excitable violinist—come, too, originally for a performance—who stayed on to teach music desultorily and dabble impetuously in mining stocks.

Mr. Shubin was one of the *émigrés*; no one knew much about his background, but he was obviously a man of some culture. He was a goldsmith, too, and though I was in no position as a child to appraise his work, I know that my parents admired it, and I remember some handsomely filigreed ornaments, fashioned in the elaborate Russian style, that he had on display in his window. His shop was only a block or two up the street from where we lived, on South Third Street, and I used to see him often, he walked heavily, with a ponderous, swaying gait that was, again, rather bearlike, and I imagine that the altitude of the place must have bothered him a little (we were at close to ten thousand feet), for he would halt every now and then and gaze around with his shy, gentle smile while he took a breather. And since he did the assaying for a small mine my father had taken over, I was brought to his shop fairly often. I remember the dim, rather untidy interior, with its clutter of jewellers' scales, racks of chemicals and other equipment, the big brick kiln at the rear of the place, and the small, cup-shaped crucibles, which he thrust in, cold, with a pair of long-handled iron pincers, and which came out fire-red and incandescent, so hot that the bits of crushed ore he had filled them with had turned molten

—with sometimes, excitingly even to me, tiny droplets of pure gold bubbling on the surface Mr Shubin would beam, delighting in my surprise at what was to him a familiar phenomenon. And once, I remember, he picked up a piece of gold wire and, with a few quick twists of his big, clumsy-looking hands and a touch or two of the hammer, shaped it into a ring for me, which I lost, unfortunately, soon after.

I remember, too, the night when I betrayed him. That was Halloween, my first one in the camp, and I was out—masked, of course—with a few other boys from the neighborhood. Again, no great harm was done. We stretched a cord, ankle-high, across his doorway, and I called to him (“You call him,” the other kids said, at the moment, I was only flattered that I, a new boy in the crowd, should be asked to take the lead. “He’ll come out for you,” they said), and he came out, and tripped, and fell, and sprained his wrist. And when he called to me to come and help him, I ran away.

He wasn’t badly hurt, of course. All the others had made off immediately, but I stayed, and I can still remember the scene: the line of cottages and stores slanting off down the steep mountain street, the lit shop with its gaping door, and in front of it the sprawled-out figure, lying motionless for a moment—not from hurt as much as from bewilderment and surprise—and then twisting around awkwardly and preparing to rise. It was his voice that released me. I’d stayed mainly because I was too fascinated to run. But I’d been held there, too, for another reason—the queer, dubious bond between the instigator and his victim—and, like a fainthearted David confronting his Goliath, I waited, half frightened and half defiant, until he’d got his hands and knees under him. Then he looked at me.

I doubt now if, disguised as I was, he even knew me. But as his eyes sought out mine through the dusk, I had no way of knowing. “Come here, boy. Help me up,” he said, and—I don’t know why, except that guilt had suddenly overtaken me—at the sound of his voice I turned and ran.

This time, there was an aftermath. A few days later, climbing down the ladder of a prospector’s shaft to inspect a mine, he fell—fortunately, near the bottom—and though he wasn’t actually hurt, he was shaken up considerably, and a week or two after that, rather suddenly, he closed up his shop and left the camp forever. I knew then, I think, that there was no connection. When I’d run away that night, of course, it had turned him, in my eyes at least, into an enemy, and after that (I suppose, much to his surprise) I had carefully avoided him, darting hastily aside, as if intent on some game, when I encountered him on the street, and taking roundabout ways home from school so as not to go past his shop. But I knew even then, or I must have, that a man’s life is far too complex in all its motivations to be much disturbed by so trivial an incident as a child’s prank on Halloween, and a good



deal of my elaborate avoidance of him was merely a ritual—like a game, slightly spiced with guilt, of hide-and-seek. And yet (I was at the age when I worried about everything—about God and whether or not I believed in Him, about life, and particularly about the strange world of adulthood that I felt myself growing into) I couldn't help wondering. It's not only the last straw that counts, the one before and the one before that are parts of the burden, too, and whatever the man's final reason might have been for going (people said it was simply the altitude), I still wondered if somehow I hadn't contributed to his decision.

Oddly, though, it was not till he'd gone—children's minds work in such strange ways—and not, indeed, till one special day after that, when I passed his shop on my way home after school, that I actually missed him. His shop was vacant still at that time (a few months later a young man from the Colorado School of Mines, a young graduate as crisp and up-to-date as Mr. Shubin had been old-fashioned and easy-going, moved in and took over), and as I passed, a sudden impulse made me stop and peer in at the window.

For a moment, the place looked as if he had never gone. Like a good many other people quitting the camp in those days, he had left all his heavier equipment behind—his desk, his safe, the bench where he made his jewelry, the kiln, of course, and the pincers and trays of crucibles that went with it. I knew why he had done it, too, for the cost of moving such things down the mountains was often greater than they were worth, and throughout the district one found cottages and cabins, long abandoned, that were still fully furnished—even, sometimes, elaborately—as their last occupants had left them. Yet in spite of all this, as I stood there, the presence of his familiar belongings seemed somehow almost inexpressibly sad to me. It was as if until then I hadn't really realized he had gone, that he had in fact gone forever, and it was not till years later, in a sudden thought of reminiscence, that I understood why I felt his absence so poignantly.

It was because, in a way that I then only dimly comprehended, Mr. Shubin had needed me. He had been kind to me, to be sure. But that wasn't the whole of it. Other men in the camp—Mr. Whalley, of Whalley & Grant, the mine-supplies store; Mr. Perry, the grocer, many others, in fact—had been kind to me. Mr. Shubin, though, had been kind in a different way. He had been kind—and it was this that it took me some years to understand—as if he'd needed my kindness, too. I was a lost boy, there in the camp, in many ways. I was the "new boy," wearing knee pants instead of overalls, and still forced to conform to an Eastern discipline that set me at a disadvantage with the other, freer fellows. And I realized suddenly that Mr. Shubin had been, in his own way, lost there, too, and though neither of us, I think, had known it fully, this had made a sort of shy, tentative bond between us. When he had waved to me from his window as I passed the shop,

it had been, in a sense, as one exile to another, and though he had smiled at my excitement as he pulled his ore samples out of the kiln, there had been no condescension in his attitude. He had done it companionably—as a mirroring, so to speak, of his own more professional interest in the qualities of the strange metal, gold.

Even though he hadn't actually known it, Mr Shubin had needed me, as, in different ways, Freddie Bassett had needed a word of assurance, or the man at the filling station some gesture of comradeship, to make him feel that all ties with his past hadn't been severed, and the extent of the need in each case had been the extent of my failure. We got a postcard from Mr. Shubin a few months after he had gone. Sent from Denver, it had a picture of the Tabor Grand Opera House, with a rather incongruous inset of a prospector on his burro in one corner; and the message, set down in a sprawled, foreign-looking script, said merely that he was well, and hoped that we were well, too.

Later on, we—or, rather, my parents—heard that he had opened a jewelry store in Ute Springs, a small town with a sulphur spring handy, in the mountains west of Denver, that was then being promoted energetically as a health resort. But there were many such—Glenwood Springs, Colorado Springs, Steamboat Springs, and the rest of them—and some prospered, some failed. Ute Springs failed, and after that, I suppose, he moved on again. We lost sight of him.

Or the little man hefting his bags down the aisle ahead of me on the train coming into Grand Central the other day, and then, when he had got them out onto the vestibule, turning, smiling, and glancing at me. He was a small, thin-faced, brown-eyed man, in a brown checked suit and a gray snapbrim hat. "Well!" he said. There was no preamble. "This is gonna be a big day for me, all right!"

But I had my own affairs to worry about, and by this time the train was gliding in to the platform. "Yes?" I said—I'm afraid, abstractedly—and I saw his face go suddenly blunt and affronted.

"Yes," he said.

Then the train stopped; the brakeman came through, and the vestibule doors were opened. "Redcap! Redcap!" the porters on the platform began calling, and in the crush getting out I lost sight of my—What shall I call him? Friend?

And, of course, you can't worry about everything. But I still wonder where he was going that day, and what has become of him.

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*PART VIII*

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***FICTION AND BELIEF:  
THE AUTHOR AND  
SOCIAL VALUES***

No logical necessity requires inclusion of this section; the numerous divisions of this book are meant partly to suggest the tenuousness of categories. I could easily have included Hortense Calisher's "In Greenwich There are Many Gravelled Walks" in the preceding section, for Miss Calisher's story makes a very direct appeal to the audience, which is expected to strongly identify with the loneliness and courage of Susan and Peter. Contrariwise, Lionel Trilling's story has many implications for social values; we identify with Howe's rejection of Blackburn, and entertain along with him

the notion that somehow Tertan is potentially the most useful member of the class. If the implication is that somehow, given the possibilities of the world of that story, we should have to behave more like Howe than like Blackburn or Tertan, then we have made ethical conclusions going beyond the story and its literary value. Most fiction has one or another degree of social concern; even the most stereotyped gangster or western movie, as we have seen, pits good against evil.

Rooney's "Cyclists' Raid," for example, casts the conduct of fictive characters in such a perspective that only a psychopath could fail to recognize the negative and positive feelings expected by the author of his reader. If irresponsible behavior can kill the young, the beautiful, and the best, an alternative must be found or the race could not go on. With the mob of motorcyclists on the one side, and a senseless lynch mob on the other, Bleeker (though the most provoked of all the townspeople) remains the admirable norm between the extremes presented by Rooney of anarchy and autocracy.

Similarly, in Calisher's story, we confront an unfolding sequence of sharp contrasts. What characters are in contrast? How does Calisher contrast them? What (if any) ethical perspectives emerge, whether explicitly or implicitly, in the story? How does the author use dialogue to unfold character? Howe and Peter are both more or less in the university world. Are they similar in important respects? How do they differ? Does Calisher convey a sense of pity for her characters? Does she have contempt for any of her characters? There are sordid aspects to Peter's life. How does Calisher deal with these? Is this story sentimental? Realistic? Pessimistic?

These are appropriate questions when we approach a story from an ethical point of view. As in persuasive prose, so in fiction, authors provide a perspective on their material. Again, unless we wish to believe in the myth of "objectivity," perspectives involve components of value systems. The author may use any of a number of means open to him to convey that value. Vahan Gregory's story, "Athens, Greece, 1942," is written in a style of restraint. The sentences are short, and the story in general sounds as if it might be a straight reportorial job. There is little attempt to get inside the characters' minds. Gregory lets the events of the story convey his sense of drama. But if it is so objectively worded, does this mean that the author "distances" himself from his material in a way that, say, Calisher does not? Compare the two stories with regard to style and tone.

On returning to the question of categories, we see that numerous possibilities are open to the novelist and the short story writer, and many possibilities present themselves to the reader in his effort to discuss literature intelligently. The section from Philip

Wyllie's **The Disappearance** could easily be placed in other sections of this volume. Which ones? But if this is so, is the passage from Wyllie's novel imaginative or expository? Is the novelist presenting these views of psychology and history as "fact," or as "true" interpretations? What is the effect of the strategy of this section from **The Disappearance**? What other novels with social themes have you read? How were you made conscious of the views of the author? How do you become conscious of Wyllie's social views? Of Calisher's?

Social values can be expressed in numerous ways. Mary McCarthy is a satirist of consummate subtlety and skill. Consider her description of the train ride at the beginning of the story. Why does she take so long to get to the point? Why is the man who enters the club car "Out of the Question"? What is the value of having the woman read an advance copy of a novel rather than a novel already out? Does Calisher employ a similar device? What is the young woman's first attitude toward the man in the Brooks Brothers shirt? Does Mary McCarthy deal sympathetically with the young woman's political ideas? Why does she so prolong the discussion between the man and the woman on politics? Is the young woman an intellectual? She seems at times to be very modern in her attitudes. Is she? If so, why does she appear at other times quite sentimental? What is McCarthy driving at?

Quality writing frequently reverses the expected or normal points of view. Can we determine anything about the audience for which Miss McCarthy is writing? How does the author feel about adultery? What is her attitude, finally, toward the woman? Toward the man? Toward the situation? Could you describe Mary McCarthy's attitude as "moralistic"? If the woman's conduct is improper, what alternatives are we offered in the story? Does it appear that Mary McCarthy is a radical, a conservative, or a moderate? (Why?) Can we detect any tone of superiority in the author? Is she contemptuous of her characters? Of her readers? What is wrong with the woman in the story? How shall we characterize the tone of the story's conclusion?

T. S. Eliot has said that the meeting place of literature and morality is in conduct. The further move toward issues of conduct and morality, the more we must return to the rhetorical issues of earlier sections in this book. Important questions arise, such as how we distinguish between literature and propaganda. Perhaps as some suggest we ought not to do so. Can you discern any values in any of the stories in this section which exist independently of any moral imperatives present or not present in the stories?

What Eliot was talking about, of course, is that the talented writer has a ready audience; he can sway, influence, convince. For

this reason, Eliot urged that one read very widely in order to cancel out the weight of any individual writer's personality on one's own character. Whatever one's motivation, breadth in one's reading is valuable. But must we assume that there is necessarily any influence on one's conduct as a result of one's reading? Be that as it may, the artist can deal with values far more flexibly than the gym teacher or soap box orator. McCarthy, for whatever effect she may have on one's conduct, is saying more than "Young woman, eschew the company of men in club cars." It is true that the writer controls all the choices. Unlike the preacher, the advertizer, or the politician, the literary artist need not answer those who disagree with him; his imaginative world and the values in it are of his own choosing. But in a story as rich and complex as McCarthy's, the moral issues transcend any specific act. The issue here is one of self-awareness. And what sensible man would alienate himself from that value?

# IN GREENWICH THERE ARE MANY GRAVELLED WALKS

HORTENSE CALISHER



On an afternoon in early August, Peter Birge, just returned from driving his mother to the Greenwich sanitarium she had to frequent at intervals, sat down heavily on a furbelowed sofa in the small apartment he and she had shared ever since his return from the Army a year ago. He was thinking that his usually competent solitude had become more than he could bear. He was a tall, well-built young man of about twenty-three, with a pleasant face whose even, standardized look was the effect of proper food, a good dentist, the best schools, and a brush haircut. The heat, which bored steadily into the room through a Venetian blind lowered over a half-open window, made his white T shirt cling to his chest and arms, which were still brown from a week's sailing in July at a cousin's place on the Sound. The family of cousins, one cut according to the pattern of a two-car-and-country-club suburbia, had always looked with distaste on his precocious childhood with his mother in the Village and, the few times he had been farmed out to them during those early years, had received his healthy normality with ill-concealed surprise, as if they had clearly expected to have to fatten up what they undoubtedly referred to in private as "poor Anne's boy." He had only gone there at all, this time, when it became certain that the money saved up for a summer abroad, where his Army stint had not sent him, would have to be spent on one of his mother's trips to Greenwich, leaving barely enough, as it

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was, for his next, and final, year at the School of Journalism. Half out of disheartenment over his collapsed summer, half to provide himself with a credible "out" for the too jovially pressing cousins at Rye, he had registered for some courses at the Columbia summer session. Now these were almost over, too, leaving a gap before the fall semester began. He had cut this morning's classes in order to drive his mother up to the place in Connecticut.

He stepped to the window and looked through the blind at the convertible parked below, on West Tenth Street. He ought to call the garage for the pickup man, or else, until he thought of someplace to go, he ought to hop down and put up the top. Otherwise, baking there in the hot sun, the car would be like a griddle when he went to use it, and the leather seats were cracking badly anyway.

It had been cool when he and his mother started, just after dawn that morning, and the air of the well-ordered countryside had had that almost speaking freshness of early day. With her head bound in a silk scarf and her chubby little chin tucked into the cardigan which he had buttoned on her without forcing her arms into the sleeves, his mother, peering up at him with the near-gaiety born of relief, had had the exhausted charm of a child who has just been promised the thing for which it has nagged. Anyone looking at the shingled hair, the feet in small brogues—anyone not close enough to see how drawn and beakish her nose looked in the middle of her little, round face, which never reddened much with drink but at the worst times took on a sagging, quilted whiteness—might have thought the two of them were a couple, any couple, just off for a day in the country. No one would have thought that only a few hours before, some time after two, he had been awakened, pounded straight up on his feet, by the sharp, familiar cry and then the agonized susurrus of prattling that went on and on and on, that was different from her everyday, artlessly confidential prattle only in that now she could not stop, she could not stop, *she could not stop*, and above the small, working mouth with its eliding, spinning voice, the glazed button eyes opened wider and wider, as if she were trying to breathe through them. Later after the triple bromide, the warm bath, and the crooning, practiced soothing he administered so well, she had hiccuped into crying, then into stillness at last, and had fallen asleep on his breast. Later still, she had awakened him, for he must have fallen asleep there in the big chair with her, and with the weak, humiliated goodness which always followed these times she had even tried to help him with the preparations for the journey—preparations which, without a word between them, they had set about at once. There'd been no doubt, of course, that she would have to go. There never was.

He left the window and sat down again in the big chair, and smoked one cigarette after another. Actually, for a drunkard—or an



alcoholic, as people preferred to say these days—his mother was the least troublesome of any. He had thought of it while he packed the pairs of daintily kept shoes, the sweet-smelling blouses and frou-frou underwear, the tiny, perfect dresses—of what a comfort it was that she had never grown raddled or blowzy. Years ago, she had perfected the routine within which she could feel safe for months at a time. It had gone on for longer than he could remember, from before the death of his father, a Swedish engineer, on the income of whose patents they had always been able to live fairly comfortably, probably even during her life with that other long-dead man, the painter whose model and mistress she had been in the years before she married his father. There would be the long, drugged sleep of the morning, then the unsteady hours when she manicured herself back into cleanliness and reality. Then, at about four or five in the afternoon, she and the dog (for there was always a dog) would make their short pilgrimage to the clubby, cozy little hangout where she would be a fixture until far into the morning, where she had been a fixture for the last twenty years.

Once, while he was at boarding school, she had made a supreme effort to get herself out of the routine—for his sake, no doubt—and he had returned at Easter to a new apartment, uptown, on Central Park West. All that this had resulted in was inordinate taxi fares and the repetitious nightmare evenings when she had gotten lost and he had found her, a small, untidy heap, in front of their old place. After a few months, they had moved back to the Village, to those few important blocks where she felt safe and known and loved. For they all knew her there, or got to know her—the aging painters, the newcomer poets, the omniscient news hacks, the military spinsters who bred dogs, the anomalous, sandalled young men. And they accepted her, this dainty hanger-on who neither painted nor wrote but hung their paintings on her walls, faithfully read their parti-colored magazines, and knew them all—their shibboleths, their feuds, the whole vocabulary of their disintegration, and, in a mild, occasional manner, their beds.

Even this, he could not remember not knowing. At ten, he had been an expert compounder of remedies for hangover, and of an evening, standing sleepily in his pajamas to be admired by the friends his mother sometimes brought home, he could have predicted accurately whether the party would end in a brawl or in a murmurous coupling in the dark.

It was curious, he supposed now, stubbing out a final cigarette, that he had never judged resentfully either his mother or her world. By the accepted standards, his mother had done her best, he had been well housed, well schooled, even better loved than some of the familed boys he had known. Wisely, too, she had kept out of his other life, so that he had never had to be embarrassed there except

once, and this when he was grown, when she had visited his Army camp. Watching her at a post party for visitors, poised there, so chic, so distinctive, he had suddenly seen it begin: the fear, the scare, then the compulsive talking, which always started so innocently that only he would have noticed at first—that warm, excited, buttery flow of harmless little lies and pretensions which gathered its dreadful speed and content and ended then, after he had whipped her away, just as it had ended this morning.

On the way up this morning, he had been too clever to subject her to a restaurant, but at a drive-in place he was able to get her to take some coffee. How grateful they had both been for the coffee, she looking up at him, tremulous, her lips pecking at the cup, he blessing the coffee as it went down her! And afterward, as they flew onward, he could feel her straining like a homing pigeon toward their destination, toward the place where she felt safest of all, where she would gladly have stayed forever if she had just had enough money for it, if they would only let her stay. For there the pretty little woman and her dog—a poodle, this time—would be received like the honored guest that she was, so trusted and docile a guest, who asked only to hide there during the season of her discomfort, who was surely the least troublesome of them all.

He had no complaints, then, he assured himself as he sat on the burning front seat of the convertible trying to think of somewhere to go. It was just that while others of his age still shared a communal wonder at what life might hold, he had long since been solitary in his knowledge of what life was.

Up in a sky as honestly blue as a flag, an airplane droned smartly toward Jersey. Out at Rye, the younger crowd at the club would be commandeering the hot blue day, the sand, and the water, as if these were all extensions of themselves. They would use the evening this way, too, disappearing from the veranda after a dance, exploring each other's rhythm-and-whiskey-whetted appetites in the backs of cars. They all thought themselves a pretty sophisticated bunch, the young men who had graduated not into a war but into its hung-over peace, the young girls attending junior colleges so modern that the deans had to spend all their time declaring that their girls were being trained for the family and the community. But when Peter looked close and saw how academic their sophistication was, how their undamaged eyes were still starry with expectancy, their lips still avidly open for what life would surely bring, then he became envious and awkward with them, like a guest at a party to whose members he carried bad news he had no right to know, no right to tell.

He turned on the ignition and let the humming motor prod him into a decision. He would drop in at Robert Vielum's where he had dropped in quite often until recently, for the same reason that others

stopped by at Vielum's—because there was always likely to be somebody there. The door of Robert's old-fashioned apartment, on Claremont Avenue, almost always opened on a heartening jangle of conversation and music, which meant that others had gathered there, too, to help themselves over the pauses so endemic to university life—the life of the mind—and there were usually several members of Robert's large acquaintance among the sub-literary, quasi-artistic, who had strayed in, ostensibly en route somewhere, and who lingered on hopefully on the chance that in each other's company they might find out what that somewhere was.

Robert was a perennial taker of courses—one of these nonmatriculated students of indefinable age and income, some of whom pursued, with monkish zeal and no apparent regard for time, this or that freakishly peripheral research project of their own conception, and others of whom, like Robert, seemed to derive a Ponce de León sustenance from the young. Robert himself, a large man of between forty and fifty, whose small features were somewhat cramped together in a wide face, never seemed bothered by his own lack of direction, implying rather that this was really the catholic approach of the "whole man," alongside of which the serious pursuit of a degree was somehow foolish, possibly vulgar. Rumor connected him with a rich Boston family that had remittanced him at least as far as New York, but he never spoke about himself, although he was extraordinarily alert to gossip. Whatever income he had he supplemented by renting his extra room to a series of young men students. The one opulence among his dun-colored, perhaps consciously Spartan effects was a really fine record-player, which he kept going at all hours with selections from his massive collection. Occasionally he annotated the music, or the advance-copy novel that lay on his table, with foreign-language tags drawn from the wide, if obscure, latitudes of his travels, and it was his magic talent for assuming that his young friends, too, had known, had experienced, that, more than anything, kept them enthralled.

"*Fabelhaft!* Isn't it?" he would say of the Mozart "Remember how they did it that last time at Salzburg!" and they would all sit there, included, belonging, headily remembering the Salzburg to which they had never been. Or he would pick up the novel and lay it down again. "*La plume de mon oncle*, I'm afraid *La plume de mon oncle Gide*. *Eheu*, poor Gide!"—and they would each make note of the fact that one need not read that particular book, that even, possibly, it was no longer necessary to read Gide.

Peter parked the car and walked into the entrance of Robert's apartment house, smiling to himself, lightened by the prospect of company. After all, he had been weaned on the salon talk of such circles; these self-fancying little bohemoias at least made him feel at home. And Robert was cleverer than most—it was amusing to watch

him. For just as soon as his satellites thought themselves secure on the promontory of some "trend" he had pointed out to them, they would find that he had deserted them, had gone on to another trend, another eminence, from which he beckoned, cocksure and just faintly malicious. He harmed no one permanently. And if he concealed some skeleton of a weakness, some closeted Difference with the Authorities, he kept it decently interred.

As Peter stood in the dark, soiled hallway and rang the bell of Robert's apartment, he found himself as suddenly depressed again, unaccountably reminded of his mother. There were so many of them, and they affected you so, these charmers who, if they could not offer you the large strength, could still atone for the lack with so many small decencies. It was admirable, surely, the way they managed this. And surely, after all, they harmed no one.

Robert opened the door. "Why, hello—Why, hello, Peter!" He seemed surprised, almost relieved. "Greetings!" he added, in a voice whose boom was more in the manner than the substance. "Come in, Pietro, come in!" He wore white linen shorts, a zebra-striped beach shirt, and huarches, in which he moved easily, leading the way down the dark hall of the apartment, past the two bedrooms, into the living room. All of the apartment was on a court, but on the top floor, so it received a medium, dingy light from above. The living room, long and pleasant, with an old white mantel, a gas log, and many books, always came as a surprise after the rest of the place, and at any time of day Robert kept a few lamps lit, which rouged the room with an evening excitement.

As they entered, Robert reached over in passing and turned on the record-player. Music filled the room, muted but insistent, as if he wanted it to patch up some lull he had left behind. Two young men sat in front of the dead gas log. Between them was a table littered with maps, an open atlas, travel folders, glass beer steins. Vince, the current roomer, had his head on his clenched fists. The other man, a stranger, indolently raised a dark, handsome head as they entered.

"Vince!" Robert spoke sharply. "You know Peter Birge. And this is Mario Osti. Peter Birge."

The dark young man nodded and smiled, lounging in his chair. Vince nodded. His red-rimmed eyes looked beyond Peter into some distance he seemed to prefer.

"God, isn't it but hot!" Robert said. "I'll get you a beer." He bent over Mario with an inquiring look, a caressing hand on the empty glass in front of him.

Mario stretched back on the chair, smiled upward at Robert, and shook his head sleepily. "Only makes me hotter." He yawned, spread his arms languorously, and let them fall. He had the animal self-possession of the very handsome; it was almost a shock to hear him speak.

Robert bustled off to the kitchen.

"Robert!" Vince called, in his light, pouting voice. "Get me a drink. Not a beer. A drink." He scratched at the blond stubble on his cheek with a nervous, pointed nail. On his round head and retroussé face, the stubble produced the illusion of a desiccated baby, until, looking closer, one imagined that he might never have been one, but might have been spawned at the age he was, to mummify perhaps but not to grow. He wore white shorts exactly like Robert's, and his blue-and-white striped shirt was a smaller version of Robert's brown-and-white, so that the two of them made an ensemble, like the twin outfits the children wore on the beach at Rye.

"You know I don't keep whiskey here." Robert held three steins deftly balanced, his heavy hips neatly avoiding the small tables which scattered the room. "You've had enough, wherever you got it." It was true, Peter remembered, that Robert was fonder of drinks with a flutter of ceremony about them—*café brûlé* perhaps, or, in the spring, a *Maibowle*, over which he could chant the triumphant details of his pursuit of the necessary woodruff. But actually one tumbled here on the exhilarating effect of wearing one's newest façade, in the fit company of others similarly attired.

Peter picked up his stein "You and Vince all set for Morocco, I gather."

"Morocco?" Robert took a long pull at his beer. "No. No, that's been changed. I forgot you hadn't been around. Mario's been brushing up my Italian. He and I are off for Rome the day after tomorrow."

The last record on the changer ended in an archaic battery of horns. In the silence while Robert slid on a new batch of records, Peter heard Vince's nail scrape, scrape along his cheek. Still leaning back, Mario shaped smoke with his lips. Large and facilely drawn, they looked, more than anything, accessible—to a stream of smoke, of food, to another mouth, to any plum that might drop.

"You going to study over there?" Peter said to him.

"Paint." Mario shaped and let drift another corolla of smoke.

"No," Robert said, clicking on the record arm. "I'm afraid Africa's *démodé*." A harpsichord began to play, its dwarf notes hollow and perfect. Robert raised his voice a shade above the music "Full of fashion photographers. And little come-lately writers." He sucked in his cheeks and made a face. "Trying out their passions under the beeg, bad sun."

"*Ehue*, poor Africa?" said Peter.

Robert laughed. Vince stared at him out of wizened eyes. Not drink, so much, after all, Peter decided, looking professionally at the mottled cherub face before he realized that he was comparing it with another face, but lately left. He looked away.

"Weren't you going over, Peter?" Robert leaned against the machine.

"Not this year." Carefully Peter kept out of his voice the knell the words made in his mind. In Greenwich, there were many gravelled walks, unshrubbbed except for the nurses who dotted them, silent and attitudinized as trees. "Isn't that Landowska playing?"

"Hmm. Nice and cooling on a hot day. Or a fevered brow." Robert fiddled with the volume control. The music became louder, than lowered. "Vince wrote a poem about that once About the Mozart, really, wasn't it, Vince? 'A lovely clock between ourselves and time.'" He enunciated daintily, pushing the words away from him with his tongue.

"Turn it off!" Vince stood up, his small fists clenched, hanging at his sides

"No, let her finish." Robert turned deliberately and closed the lid of the machine, so that the faint hiss of the needle vanished from the frail, metronomic notes He smiled. "What a time-obsessed crowd writers are Now Mario doesn't have to bother with that dimension."

"Not unless I paint portraits," Mario said. His parted lips exposed his teeth, like some white, unexpected flint of intelligence.

"*Dolce far niente*," Robert said softly. He repeated the phrase dreamily, so that half-known Italian words—"loggia," the "Ponte Vecchio," the "Lungarno"—imprinted themselves one by one on Peter's mind, and he saw the two of them, Mario and Roberto now, already in the frayed-gold light of Florence, in the umber dusk of half-imagined towns.

A word, muffled, came out of Vince's throat He lunged for the record-player. Robert seized his wrist and held it down on the lid. They were locked that way, staring at each other, when the doorbell rang

"That must be Susan," Robert said. He released Vince and looked down, watching the blood return to his fingers, flexing his palm.

With a second choked sound, Vince flung out his fist in an awkward attempt at a punch. It grazed Robert's cheek, clawing downward. A thin line of red appeared on Robert's cheek Fist to mouth, Vince stood a moment; then he rushed from the room. They heard the nearer bedroom door slam and the lock click The bell rang again, a short, hesitant burr.

Robert clapped his hand to his cheek, shrugged, and left the room

Mario got up out of his chair for the first time. "Aren't you going to ask who Susan is?"

"Should I?" Peter leaned away from the face bent confidentially near, curly with glee.

"His daughter," Mario whispered "He said he was expecting his *daughter* Can you imagine? *Robert!*"

Peter moved farther away from the mobile, pressing face and, standing at the window, studied the gritty details of the courtyard. A vertical line of lighted windows, each with a glimpse of stair,

marked the hallways on each of the five floors. Most of the other windows were dim and closed, or opened just a few inches above their white ledges, and the yard was quiet. People would be away or out in the sun, or in their brighter front rooms dressing for dinner, all of them avoiding this dark shaft that connected the backs of their lives. Or, here and there, was there someone sitting in the fading light, someone lying on a bed with his face pressed to a pillow? The window a few feet to the right, around the corner of the court, must be the window of the room into which Vince had gone. There was no light in it.

Robert returned, a Kleenex held against his cheek. With him was a pretty, ruffled-headed girl in a navy-blue dress with a red arrow at each shoulder. He switched on another lamp. For the next arrival, Peter thought, surely he will tug back a velvet curtain or break out with a heraldic flourish of drums, recorded by Red Seal. Or perhaps the musty wardrobe was opening at last and was this the skeleton—this girl who had just shaken hands with Mario, and now extended her hand toward Peter, tentatively, timidly, as if she did not habitually shake hands but today would observe every custom she could.

"How do you do?"

"How do you do?" Peter said. The hand he held for a moment was small and childish, the nails unpainted, but the rest of her was very correct for the eye of the beholder, like the young models one sees in magazines, sitting or standing against a column, always in three-quarter view, so that the picture, the ensemble, will not be marred by the human glance. Mario took from her a red dressing case that she held in her free hand, bent to pick up a pair of white gloves that she had dropped, and returned them with an avid interest which overbalanced, like a waiter's gallantry. She sat down, brushing at the gloves.

"The train was awfully dusty—and crowded." She smiled tightly at Robert, looked hastily and obliquely at each of the other two, and bent over the gloves, brushing earnestly, stopping as if someone had said something, and, when no one did, brushing again.

"Well, well, well," Robert said. His manners, always good, were never so to the point of clichés, which would be for him what nervous *gaffes* were for other people. He coughed, rubbed his cheek with the back of his hand, looked at the hand, and stuffed the Kleenex into the pocket of his shorts. "How was camp?"

Mario's eyebrows went up. The girl was twenty, surely, Peter thought.

"All right," she said. She gave Robert the stiff smile again and looked down into her lap. "I like helping children. They can use it." Her hands folded on top of the gloves, then inched under and hid beneath them.

"Susan's been counselling at a camp which broke up early because

of a polio scare," Robert said as he sat down. "She's going to use Vince's room while I'm away, until college opens."

"Oh—" She looked up at Peter. "Then you aren't Vince?"

"No I just dropped in. I'm Peter Birge."

She gave him a neat nod of acknowledgment. "I'm glad, because I certainly wouldn't want to inconvenience—"

"Did you get hold of your mother in Reno?" Robert asked quickly.

"Not yet. But she couldn't break up her residence term anyway. And Arthur must have closed up the house here. The phone was disconnected."

"Arthur's Susan stepfather," Robert explained with a little laugh. "Number three, I think. Or it is *four*, Sue?"

Without moving, she seemed to retreat, so that again there was nothing left for the observer except the girl against the column, any one of a dozen with the short, anonymous nose, the capped hair, the foot arched in the trim shoe, and half an iris glossed with an expertly aimed photoflood. "Three," she said. Then one of the hidden hands stole out from under the gloves, and she began to munch evenly on a fingernail.

"Heavens, you haven't still got that *habit*!" Robert said.

"What a heavy papa you make, Roberto," Mario said.

She flushed, and put the hand back in her lap, tucking the fingers under. She looked from Peter to Mario and back again. "Then you're not Vince," she said. "I didn't think you were."

The darkness increased around the lamps. Behind Peter, the court had become brisk with lights, windows sliding up, and the sound of taps running.

"Guess Vince fell asleep. I'd better get him up and send him on his way," Robert shrugged, and rose.

"Oh, don't! I wouldn't want to be an inconvenience," the girl said, with a polite terror which suggested she might often have been one.

"On the contrary," Robert spread his palms, with a smile, and walked down the hall. They heard him knocking on a door, then his indistinct voice.

In the triangular silence, Mario stepped past Peter and slid the window up softly. He leaned out to listen, peering sidewise at the window to the right. As he was pulling himself back in, he looked down. His hands stiffened on the ledge. Very slowly he pulled himself all the way in and stood up. Behind him a tin ventilator clattered inward and fell to the floor. In the shadowy lamplight his too classic face was like marble which moved numbly. He swayed a little, as if with vertigo.

"I'd better get out of here!"



They heard his heavy breath as he dashed from the room. The slam of the outer door blended with Robert's battering, louder now, on the door down the hall.

"What's down there?" She was beside Peter, otherwise he could not have heard her. They took hands, like strangers met on a narrow footbridge or on one of those steep places where people cling together more for anchorage against their own impulse than for balance. Carefully they leaned out over the sill. Yes—it was down there, the shirt, zebra-striped, just decipherable on the merged shadow of the courtyard below.

Carefully, as if they were made of eggshell, as if by some guarded movement they could still rescue themselves from disaster, they drew back and straightened up. Robert, his face askew with the impossible question, was behind them.

After this, there was the hubub—the ambulance from St. Luke's, the prowler car, the two detectives from the precinct station house, and finally the "super," a vague man with the grub pallor and shamble of those who live in basements. He pawed over the keys on the thong around his wrist, after several tries, opened the bedroom door. It was a quiet, unviolent room with a tossed bed and an open window, with a stagy significance acquired only momentarily in the minds of those who gathered in a group at its door.

Much later, after midnight, Peter and Susan sat in the bald glare of an all-night restaurant. With hysterical eagerness, Robert had gone on to the station house with the two detectives to register the salient facts, to help ferret out the relatives in Ohio, to arrange, in fact, anything that might still be arrangeable about Vince. Almost without noticing, he had acquiesced in Peter's proposal to look after Susan. Susan herself, after silently watching the gratuitous burbling of her father, as if it were a phenomenon she could neither believe nor leave, had followed Peter without comment. At his suggestion, they had stopped off at the restaurant on their way to her stepfather's house, for which she had a key.

"Thanks. I was starved." She leaned back and pushed at the short bang of hair on her forehead.

"Hadn't you eaten at all?"

"Just those pasty sandwiches they sell on the train. There wasn't any diner."

"Smoke?"

"I do, but I'm just too tired. I can get into a hotel all right, don't you think? If I can't get in at Arthur's?"

"I know the manager of a small one near us," Peter said. "But if you don't mind coming to my place, you can use my mother's room for tonight. Or for as long as you need, probably."

"What about your mother?"

"She's away. She'll be away for quite a while."

"Not in Reno, by any chance?" There was a roughness, almost a coarseness, in her tone, like that in the overdone camaraderie of the shy.

"No. My father died when I was eight. Why?"

"Oh, something in the way you spoke. And then you're so competent. Does she work?"

"No. My father left something. Does yours?"

She stood up and picked up her bedraggled gloves. "No," she said, and her voice was suddenly distant and delicate again. "She marries." She turned and walked out ahead of him.

He paid, rushed out of the restaurant, and caught up with her.

"Thought maybe you'd run out on me," he said.

She got in the car without answering.

They drove through the Park, toward the address in the East Seventies that she had given him. A weak smell of grass underlay the gas-blended air, but the Park seemed limp and worn, as if the strain of the day's effluvia had been too much for it. At the Seventy-second Street stop signal, the blank light of a street lamp invaded the car.

"Thought you might be feeling Mrs. Grundyish at my suggesting the apartment," Peter said.

"Mrs. Grundy wasn't around much when I grew up." The signal changed and they moved ahead.

They stopped in a street which had almost no lights along its smartly converted house fronts. This was one of the streets, still sequestered by money, whose houses came alive only under the accelerated, febrile glitter of winter and would dream through the gross summer days, their interiors deadened with muslin or stirred faintly with the subterranean clinkings of caretakers. No. 4 was dark.

"I would rather stay over at your place, if I have to," the girl said. Her voice was offhand and prim. "I hate hotels. We always stopped at them in between."

"Let's get out and see."

They stepped down into the areaway in front of the entrance, the car door banging hollowly behind them. She fumbled in her purse and took out a key, although it was already obvious that it would not be usable. In his childhood, he had often hung around in the areaways of old brownstones such as this had been. In the corners there had always been a soft, decaying smell, and the ironwork, bent and smeared, always hung loose and broken-toothed. The areaway of this house had been repaved with slippery flag; even in the humid night there was no smell. Black-tongued grillwork, with an oily shine and padlocked, secured the windows and the smooth door. Fastened on the grillwork in front of the door was the neat, square proclamation of a protection agency.

"You don't have a key for the padlocks, do you?"

"No." She stood on the curb, looking up at the house. "It was a nice room I had there. Nicest one I ever did have, really." She crossed to the car and got in.

He followed her over to the car and got in beside her. She had her head in her hands.

"Don't worry. We'll get in touch with somebody in the morning."

"I don't. I don't care about any of it, really." She sat up, her face averted. "My parents, or any of the people they tangle with." She wound the lever on the door slowly, then reversed it. "Robert, or my mother, or Arthur," she said, "although he was always pleasant enough. Even Vince—even if I'd known him."

"He was just a screwed-up kid. It could have been anybody's window."

"No." Suddenly she turned and faced him. "I should think it would be the best privilege there is, though. To care, I mean."

When he did not immediately reply, she gave him a little pat on the arm and sat back. "Excuse it, please. I guess I'm groggy." She turned around and put her head on the crook of her arm. Her words came faintly through it. "Wake me when we get there."

She was asleep by the time they reached his street. He parked the car as quietly as possible beneath his own windows. He himself had never felt more awake in his life. He could have sat there until morning with her sleep-secured beside him. He sat thinking of how different it would be at Rye, or anywhere, with her along, with someone along who was the same age. For they were the same age, whatever that was, whatever the age was of people like them. There was nothing he would be unable to tell her.

To the north, above the rooftops, the electric mauve of midtown blanked out any auguries in the sky, but he wasn't looking for anything like that. Tomorrow he would take her for a drive—whatever the weather. There were a lot of good roads around Greenwich.

# THE UNLOVED

PHILIP WYLIE



Two dichotomies have characterized Western twentieth-century society: a scientific objectivity that had no equal subjective logic, and the schism of the sexes. "Modern" man was never in any complete sense scientific. To objects he applied the honest scrutiny of his mind and so developed his technologies. To every instrument with which he examined and measured objects, *save one*, he gave the most critical analysis. The one was himself. For *the scientist* is the final, supreme and absolute instrument of his "sciences." Not to understand the doer is to have no certain knowledge of what has been done, or why it was undertaken.

Soon after the nuclear physicists delivered to the world an atomic bomb they asserted that "man" must develop a "moral science" as effective as his objective sciences or perish from an imbalance of objective power and subjective imbecility.

How pitiful, how pretentious, how ludicrous! Yet neither the physicists nor any other "scientists" of their ilk seemed to be embarrassed. They were saying in effect that they had carried the pursuit of the knowledge of *things* far beyond the intellectual capacity of average men; with the same breath, they demanded of average men—or at least of others, not themselves—the development of a new "science" of ideas to bridge the gap their one-sided enterprise had created, a "science" whereof *they* had no clue.

These same gentlemen would scarcely have fired a boiler without first checking its gauge. For some centuries, however, they had stoked

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the flames of objective learning without troubling themselves to check rising pressures within the species or even to discern whether the assumed pressure levels were correct. Thus the search for "pure" knowledge was conducted by the methodology of pure ignorance: the man sawing off the limb on which he perches is every whit as "scientific" as most of the great men in the lexicon of the pioneers of "learning."

The fact that when they cried out for a "new" science (to save the lives of their species, countrymen, colleagues, children and selves) such a science *had been* developed in their presence for a half a century, but revealed one more blurred facet of their minds: like most of their scientific predecessors, they lacked the energy, the detachment, the acumen and the *integrity* to investigate knowledge outside their own narrow spheres.

At the turn of the century the science of psychology concerned itself with such phenomena as sense perceptions, reason and logic, reflexes and their conditioning, the relationship to these of heredity and environment, and the like. Most *academic* "psychologists" today are still ignorant of discoveries in their own field outside such exceedingly *objective* regions. A few concede that, through medicine, Freud and others have made certain contributions to what they term "abnormal psychology." But it is a subject neglected or regarded with suspicion by most institutions of so-called higher learning. Unfortunately for the wisdom of modern men, fealty to the tradition, along with neglect of the new findings of psychology, has rendered most of them, in Cousin's word, obsolete.

What has been learned reveals that the best educated persons seldom accurately identify the *motives* of their acts. Men do not know what they are doing because they do not know *why* they do it. Obviously, the gathering of objective information for the subjectively naïve is not a sensible procedure. The man in the street and the researcher into physical phenomena *ought* to know something of human motives. So the idea of "knowledge for its own sake" is the alibi of a long and tiresome retinue of men, clever but not wise, who refused to face *themselves* scientifically. It is a lame and sorry defense of weak men who wondered about stars, and weighed them. Wondering itself, they never weighed. . . .

Personality is shaped in infancy and early childhood. The conflict between the raw cravings of the infant and the efforts of its elders to mold it to some particular cultural pattern is the tense matrix that sets the "style" of every adult. The infant's cravings (id) were identified as *instinctual*. What happened in the cradle (or failed to happen there) may be repeated, in endless forms, by the adolescent, the college student, the man as he marries and the same man as the bad-tempered, ill-adjusted, prejudiced, child-adult who

presides as chairman of the board of a great corporation. That is the essence of Freud's discoveries. He showed how early the conditioning of human reflex begins

Other psychologists have demonstrated that instinct is not merely a vestigial phenomenon in the young child but that, in man as in all creatures, instinct unfolds a series of compulsions and taboos which parallel biological development. Jung revealed *collective* aspects of instinct: man, the maker of symbols, images, words and myths—and religions of these, and from religions, cultures—thereby expresses *versions* of the basic pattern of his instincts. That theory stands as the only complete and plausible explanation of human history, in this essayist's opinion. It defines the religious and/or cultural imperative in man, at the same time, it shows how cultural diversity came about—just as Freud's concepts show how culture is imbued in each generation. Jung presents, also, the only satisfactory accounting for what *happened* to instinct (which so largely controls the behavior of all creatures) when one of them at last evolved a measure of consciousness and reason. It is coherent, "general field theory" of the psyche, seen finely in each man, and broadly in the record of man's ascent from apeness.

These findings have been arrived at by scientific investigations not always of what man *thinks* and *believes* about himself, but very often of what takes place in his subconscious or unconscious mind. It is here that instinct (repressed through ages by a creature attempting to seem "superior" to the rest of instinctual nature) works autonomously. Efforts to perceive instinctual compulsion, whereby men are able to cling to the shameful chaos of their present innumerable "convictions" or (with equal and equally insensate vigor) to their conscious *lacks* of conviction, *have succeeded!*

Psychology, in revealing that much of the inner nature of humanity, has also disclosed *why* and *how* its own overwhelmingly important findings are still almost universally rejected: the ego of man, the one subjective entity he has thus far come to recognize, sees that what the psychologists have found—if analyzed, ingested and digested—will change ego itself. And man's greatest fear then summons instinct to defend ego: the animal dread of *any* change in his personal identity. Only those courageous enough to master that primordial fear have been able to understand, or to benefit by, psychology. They are as yet very few, even amongst the brave physical scientists, who often regard themselves as the repositories of all erudition.

Persons of prior conviction, whether in Roman Catholicism, Presbyterianism, atheism, dialectical materialism, spiritualism, or Mohammedanism—as may be seen—have thus forged unconsciously such bonds between ego and instinct that the penetration of the complex whole is well-nigh impossible. Here instinct rules them, not reason;

here instinct identifies the "light" of their convinced egos as the sum of enlightenment. Such is the mechanism of faith and belief; such, the iron curtain confronting the modern psychologist.

The problem is not unprecedented. Even physical "scientists" have never taken an open-minded attitude toward truly new ideas, in spite of their pretensions. The learned of his era did not examine Galileo's hypotheses; they put him to Inquisition. Darwin is today disputed: the bones of a hundred "missing links" stand assembled in museums, yet many scientists still assert the parent betwixt themselves and apes has not been dug up and never will be. Medical doctors allowed generations to die of infection after Lister and Pasteur; they rejected the "germ theory." It needed a martyr to abate childbed fever. What Einstein announced early in this era was regarded as ludicrous by many mathematicians—who smile at the postulates no longer.

Strides in new knowledge are taken slowly, usually against the will of the currently knowledgeable; and "education" is designed far more to freeze learning than to advance it. For education caters to the cultural pattern, and promulgates it. Education slams the door of every tabooed vista in the face of all youthful interest. It meticulously blunts imagination and stultifies criticism. It but *conveys* a culture; in that task, the errors of the culture and its unchallenged prohibitions are handed down. It discourages the rebel and the innovator, it sedulously abets the conformer.

No society yet has evolved a technique for *progressive change* in its cultural ideas, because religions, on which cultures are founded, would be avowedly tentative in such a process. But as long as religions remain *unconscious* efforts to patternize instinct they will partake automatically of instinct's compulsiveness. That is, absolute *doctrine* will characterize them and *tentativeness* will seem heretical and will be abhorred.

To incorporate a new advance of fundamental awareness, mankind has therefore always found it necessary to build a new culture on the wreck of some older one. The nearest approach to a resolution of this wasteful habit is found in the idea of freedom. Freedom supplies the theoretical room, at least, for subjective advances. But freedom in practice has generally deteriorated, under the pressure of new ideas to which it always gives rise, to a status where "liberty" is transferred from the innovators to the traditionalists so that, once again, it finally surrenders its franchise to tyranny.

Men have only now looked at themselves with the intellectual techniques the objective sciences have developed. And only a very few have so far summoned up nerve enough for that. The spectacle—like each spectacle of fresh discovery—is so *different* from contemporary belief that most persons summarily reject the whole finding.

Indeed, the essayist has heard it said repeatedly in the past decade that Freud has gone "out of date." Disturbed myriads said Newton was out of date too, and Copernicus, and a hundred more; but all such efforts of the willfully ignorant did not, in the end, prevail against the simple facts that Newton, Copernicus and the rest had turned up. Since Freud and Jung similarly discovered new truth (and empirical, clinical evidence proves that they did), the willfully ignorant of this age, however highly placed or many-degreed, cannot prevail against those findings in the end, either.

Quackeries have flourished in every science, especially at its beginnings when the public had no sure basis for evaluation. Quackeries abound today in psychology. Also, the early acolytes of every science made blunders, psychologists are making them today. But each new branch of science has gradually established itself and its principles. Psychology has (or had, until the Disappearance) the same prospect.

Meanwhile, such pseudo sciences as economics, sociology and political "science" will continue to thrive anomalously because there can be no *science* in any of these fields until psychology has been incorporated by them. Man's economics, politics and society rise from currently unconscious motives; hence contemporary economists, political scientists, and sociologists merely document events without knowledge of or concern for motives. They have developed sets of tables but no instructions, directions or sensible interpretations. They deal in man and his motives without referring, as a rule, to what is known of human nature and its motivation; thus these "social sciences" are the alchemies and astrologies of the twentieth century and the "science of education" heads the claptrap retinue.

Here, of course, is the commonest, saddest and most ludicrous posture of our species: where we think we have knowledge (a "science") even our learned men relax, and even though the "knowledge" may be but some higher form of superstition. (In the "social sciences" the superstition is partly a credulity about statistics.)

The belief that we know what we don't know is another handicap of the new science of psychology. It may be set beside the damage done it by quacks, the inertia toward new learning our species has always exhibited, the fixational function of education, the diehard behavior of vested interests (in this case, of vested ideas and beliefs), and the situation of faith itself, which renders the individual impermeable to greater wisdom and especially to greater wisdom about instinct, simply because it blindly incorporates all it can of instinct. Psychology today faces a further disadvantage:

Because it is a new science its most accomplished proponents and interpreters rarely apply to it that apparatus of extrapolation which would disclose something of its probable destiny—granted, of course, that man still has a destiny. The reason for that is partly the



modest tradition of scholarship and partly the limitation even of good minds. Many psychologists and psychiatrists still think of their subject only in therapeutic terms and few truly glimpse its potentialities. Old Leeuwenhoek, peering through his early microscope, hardly foresaw what changes would be made by way of the field he observed in medicine and surgery, health, sanitation, engineering, food transportation and storage, and so forth. Faraday, watching his laboratory toy revolve, did not conjure up Bonneville Dam. With our ingrained objective attitude, we Americans have been even less inclined to foresee what a new science of the mind could mean and do to our then-smug way of life.

Such is the first dichotomy. Western society, concentrating its integrity on objects, has lost touch with the subject. Eastern societies made the opposite blunder, dwelling upon subjectivity and ignoring obvious facts and laws in the external world. Their "orientation" was too much inward; the Western, too much outward. It might be called "occidentation," a style of personality able to harness atomic energy but one which has so little learning of the energies of instinct that it greets its greatest day with the cry, "We are doomed! Somebody save us!" "Orientation" and "occidentation" are both schizoid.

The second dichotomy concerns sex.

In nature, sex is an instinct served with felicitous collaboration by paired individuals for procreative purposes. It is the chain of life; it is the trunk from which life's variegations, its evolutions, have branched ever outward toward enhanced consciousness. Sex is almost as old as life. From the cosmic standpoint, sex is measurelessly more important than humanity. Without man, sex might again produce an aware animal. Without sex, nature could but manufacture amoebas and slimes till the sun went cold and time ran out.

It is expectable, in a species that has unconsciously perverted its instincts for its immediate vanity (as religions, faiths, dogmas, dialectics, "sciences," and so on), that strong cultural compulsions and taboos would everywhere surround the ancient, potent instincts of sex. Such, of course, is the case. Western man's religions (and hence his culture) are *rooted in sex management and sustained by inculcated sex fears*. Disobedience of the "sacred" rules or of the "common" law is "sin" or "crime." Sex hunger has here been made *shameful* so as to elevate the vanity of man in relation to other animals and so as to enhance the controlling power of cultural tradition and its agencies—the churches, courts, and so on. The inescapable result is anxiety and tension in society—hypocrisy, confusion, neurosis and madness along with vast "safety valves" of vulgar activities in which libido is expended in "acceptable" forms.

Half this nation's sick have suffered not from physical disease but from psychic. Half its hospital beds were occupied by the men-

tally ill or mad. The figure has doubtless risen since the Disappearance and will doubtless continue to rise. Sex is *innate and essential*. But since it is regarded here as shameful, since this particular nation has indeed tried to establish *perfect shame* by the abolition of such sexual customs as older societies tolerated, at least sub rosa, the American people lived to the very hour of the Disappearance in *perfect guilt*. There were individual exceptions. But a national neurosis was everywhere discernible and it resulted, here even more than elsewhere, in a hostility of each sex toward the other. That rancor could have been predicted by any wise, impartial mind analyzing *a discipline of shame and guilt as the social means toward enforcing sex patterns designed not for the sake of sex, or to enhance its expression, but merely to exalt egos by a lustful identification with an arbitrary "god," a varied set of "righteousnesses."*

This second dichotomy lies entirely in the subjective realm and has lain there uninvestigated through ages and until recently. A consideration of it here may shed some illumination on the broad splitting of personality—even amongst "convinced" persons. And that, in turn, *may* give rise to new and different formulations for considering the present awful predicament in which men find themselves. Such, at least, is the essayist's reason for the undertaking.

Such—say rather—is my personal hope, and it is but a hope. . . .

The half of a world that now survives is, in many senses, a whole world. It is a whole world owing to the fact that nearly all of humanity, in nearly all of its recorded or known existence, has consisted of *two* worlds: the world of women and the world of men. In primitive societies, in barbaric nations, and in our civilization, the training of the two sexes has been different, the freedoms permitted them have been different, and the powers delegated to them or taken from them have been different. Man's greater stature, his considerably greater strength, his apparently greater penchant for the hunt, for aggression, warfare, and the construction of useful apparatus, his emancipation from the reproductive functions of child carrying, child-bearing and suckling, and his recently touted larger skull capacity have caused man to regard himself as the "dominant" or "superior" sex.

For thousands of years he has exploited the role. A human tribe in which the males think of themselves as substantially inferior to the females is a rarity, although there are a few in which childbearing is deemed the supreme human function and males consider themselves of secondary importance owing to their incapacity to give birth.

But generally, in marked degree, woman has been accorded a secondary place. She had been regarded as a slave in countless societies. She has a property status in numerous areas today. She has been denied many social, economic and political privileges accorded to men. Before the law, she is seldom equal.

Where sexuality is concerned—and in this discussion the concern

is nothing other—woman also has been grossly *demigrated*. In both the Old and the New Testament (on which Western “culture” so largely rests) woman’s biological functions have been repetitiously and remorselessly associated with filth. According to the legendary attitudes, a woman during menses is “unclean”—even though this period corresponds in certain other mammals to “heat,” i.e., to the time of “desirability.” Conception itself, in such frames of reference, is regarded as vile, so is parturition. The female who has borne a child is often supposed to be in an “unclean” condition that demands certain rituals for the restitution of her decency.

The etiology of those callow notions is obvious. A woman bleeds and desquamates at intervals; she bleeds again when her offspring is born; and she expels its placenta. To the naïve savage those processes may have seemed repugnant, especially since, owing to her stricture and to such functions, a woman is liable to infections and paritisisms of a noxious nature during such occasions or following them.

Furthermore, until very recently her childbearing was an ordeal whereof she became the apparent victim. Upon her, savages reasoned, an *affliction* rested, ergo, it was a sign of her inferiority, a punishment of the gods for what manifestly must have been implicit evil, or a visitation imposed on that weaker sex which somehow must have deserved it.

On every hand, these old stigmata have survived. “Bloody” is foul to an Englishman because the bleeding of woman was presumed foul. To American womanhood, the menstrual period was “the curse.”

The woman giving suck must do so many times each day; the necessity in primitive societies compelled her to feed her child openly; in so doing, she was spontaneously likened to the “lesser” beasts—and, again, unfavorably compared with man, whose sexual activities are more often concealed in the hut. Owing to man’s millenniums-long attempt to dissociate himself from other animals for the advantage of his ego, the mere biological means of infant nurture have been taken as one more evidence of woman’s beastlier estate!

Setting aside all concern for the justness or the reasonableness of such opinion, the fact must be recognized. No male Protestant exists, no Roman Catholic (in spite of the adoration of Mary, who is, fortunately for the Church’s ends, the result of a “virgin” birth), and no person subject to such “Christian” traditions (or any other religious doctrine) but holds in his mind an array of the ugly, repulsive and biologically preposterous woman-concepts set forth and implied in the Holy Bible or its equivalent. That venerable Anthology contains most of the wisdom of the ages—and most of the blunders and prejudices. So for two thousand and more years parts of it have conveyed to every Believer the far, far older association of inferiority, of uncleanliness, with woman!

Indeed, a Gallup Poll conducted amongst ———

doubtless show that the overwhelming majority still holds these special attitudes of shame and guilt and filthiness toward woman's biologically most lofty functions. Perhaps not one in ten has availed himself of knowledge enough to dispute the slanderous delusion and not one in a hundred, on psychological examination, would prove free of derivative, *unconscious* impressions

With such views, engraved for such periods of time on all but a small fraction of the species, and with the apparently supportive physical criteria, it is not possible to consider that men and women in the modern age lived in the same world or (from both physical and psychological standpoints) even in a similar world!

The two sexes dress differently and are differently trained. Such elaborations of different manners toward each and between each exist amongst them that hardly a word is uttered or a course of action taken that does not contain and reflect a special attitude or group of attitudes toward sexuality. In addition, while the social and outward manifestations of sex differences are given universal and incessant attention, the *true biological aspects of sex are everywhere repressed and suppressed!* Hence, beginning at birth with the pink or blue raiment that is the first mark, and continuing in each category of behavior to the grave, the externals of sex are forced into every cranny of consciousness while the truth and nature of it are left in a darkness as near-absolute as "righteous" traditionalists can keep it. In Jung's terminology, the *persona* is given every emphasis, the *anima*, *subjective* sexuality, is kept at an infantile (primitive) level.

So the sexes were set in inferior-superior relationships and so they have stood immobile for aeons. So, in recent centuries, a further terrible division has been artificially made between the sexually known and unknown. It is a rare society indeed in which male and female consider each other as equivalents or complements, evenly share work, play, counsels and society and take no magical affront, on either hand, from any aspect of the biological necessities.

The recent efforts of women in Western society to achieve "equality" with men and "emancipation" from their ageless subservience (and their successes in obtaining certain social, economic and political opportunities and enfranchisements) indubitably sprang from the gross and deep insult women have borne since long before the time of Christ. But these enterprises *merely obscured the real nature of the problem*. They tended to create the impression that the sexual schism lay in the *objective* realm, and, of course, the orientation of Western man was a fecund soil for that sort of superficial, deluded concept.

The "liberated" women found themselves (until we lost them) more restless and dissatisfied than ever before, precisely when they had achieved the "objectives" of their gallant crusades! For they had

*not* removed or even *sought* to remove the *subjective stigmas* that have for so long militated against them. The attempt would have been futile, beyond doubt, since, though women suffered and even accepted the mental sickness of the species, the *cure* could have been effected only in the minds of the principal carriers: *males*. And, as in the case of every psychological blunder, the blunderer must heal himself—with whatever guidance or help.

Here is the classic circumstance of psychological oppression: it is not (for example) the Jew who can heal anti-Semitism but the Gentile alone, whose intellectual sickness anti-Semitism is. *Only the brain can change its brain and only by first recovering the emotional sensations with which inappropriate concepts were instilled and by next replacing them with realer values in the logical expectation that new and deeper emotions will then sustain a more honest and better integrated personality.*

Woman could not change her status by donning the clothes of the free male citizen and going through his motions. In the subjective realm, from which rises all outward behavior and in which reposes all inner opinion and sensation, “emancipated” woman was still as much prisoner of the sexual prejudice as ever. And she was unhappier; for when she thought of herself as “free” she made the walls of humanity’s most colossal bigotry *invisible* and so lost even the cold comforts of enslavement. She could no longer discern a boundary she still encountered. She no longer had any idea when the guards might assail her, or for what reason or under what conditions she might run headlong into barricade, or who among men might suddenly prove to be an implacable warden, or a sadistic jailer, or a male immured amongst the women in their impalpable penitentiary.

If there is an instinct toward *realizing a pattern* in man (as certain uniquely informed and acutely discerning philosophers now hold), a negative evidence of it is found in this tragedy of the woman who thought she had “advanced.” For *any* subservient role, be it that of a slave, of a Victorian paragon and housewife, of a mansharer in a harem, will be seen to satisfy *in some degree* a putative instinct for order and arrangement. But the woman who caused the conscious mind of her society to agree that no pattern could compel her, and who was nevertheless obliged to live within the frames of old phobias, compulsions, taboos, rites, formulae, fears and repugnances, was a woman damned to be unable to discover *any* design for herself—and her anguish in the void is evidence of what was lost.

She was (as women sadly, if unintelligently, observed before the Vanishment) *emotionally worse off* even than that slave who knew she was obliged to conduct herself in accordance with the rules or die. A slave might hope for an appreciative master and a biologically effective life from which psychological satisfactions could be derived.

But the modern free woman showed by her suffering the want in her ways. She walked in the dark amidst set traps, pits, steel points, poisons, and infernal machines, where she had been led to anticipate a safer and easier passage. Consciously "free," she was unconsciously everywhere ensnared, and *no* pattern, either visible or invisible, was any longer available to her.

The average male survivor of this age will probably reject the idea that woman's dilemma has for ages been far greater than even she imagined, that it was not ameliorated in modern times, and that venerable, largely male attitudes have been the occasion of it all. But some readers will at least appreciate that, psychologically speaking, the man and the woman of the "West" have inhabited two utterly discrete worlds. The current absence of women and the powerful longings that consequently prevail may give rise to a degree of fresh perspective in the matter.

I can but wish forlornly that I had the power to convey this truth as I have at last come to see it. For in the demeaning of woman *man has demeaned himself*. His chivalry, his mother reverence, are but sickly pretenses to hide his ageless, vile convictions. What would we say of any other beast that held its mate in secret revulsion? What do we feel of the spider that copulates and then devours its mate? Let *that* be said of humanity!

The *actual* differences between the sexes of genus homo are not very great. Some women are larger than most men, some have bigger brains than most men, some are stronger. It is quite possible that by the use of genetics mankind could have reversed all conventional tendencies. And had females remained on earth instead of the males, had they found a mechanism for parthenogenesis and sex determination (which they would have had a better opportunity to do than ourselves), it is likely that in a few generations they would have accomplished precisely such reversals.

Indeed, it may be that in some remote, unrecorded period the mere *ego of the male* of a species possessing powers of choice not given to the lower orders became the *sole* determining factor—rather than any "natural" element. Men may have unconsciously commenced to keep the weaker sex weaker by electing its weaker examples for mates. That is an idle and perhaps trivial speculation. But it suggests the arbitrary fashion in which genus homo often applies choice to certain functions and rejects choice in the matter of the *results* of many of his elected acts—which is still another dichotomy I shall touch on.

Mankind has everywhere emphasized the sex *differences*. He has only recently known much of the *identities and parallels*.

In the human embryo, until the fifth or sixth week (a period corresponding with geological ages of evolution), the genital ridge

of both sexes is much the same. But as "ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny" in *that* great, pregnant pattern of all nature!) each sex produces the *same* cell groups, which only gradually take on separate shapes.

The epithelial cords form the seminiferous tubes—or the mesenchyme. The graafian follicle comes into being in one sex; in the other, from the same tissue, a transitory network in the mesovarium. The mesovarium in the female is, in the male fetus, the mesorchium. Paroophoron and organ of Giralde, common Wolffian duct—and Müllerian duct, becoming Fallopian tubes, uterus, and perhaps vagina in the female, uterus masculinus in the male. So, endlessly, the anatomical parallel continues. And while each emergent body of protoplasm takes up its appointed form and situation, neither male nor female lacks in embryo the same entities, or their rudiments or vestiges. Our outward organs appear greatly different only to the mind that does not intimately know how alike they are and of what identical tissues they have been composed. How superficial, then, how *ignorant* it is to postulate an important differentness of spermatozoa or ova, clitorises or penes or any other aspect or characteristic of the sexes!

But, again, the blunder is ageless. Again, humanity has done its utmost to enhance the final apparent differences. Once, long ago, we may have had the sensations of equality and complement which are, alone, implicit in the protoplasmic truth; we have lost them, traded them for sham and vanity, for illusion and delusion.

Modern insight into these objective identities has not been employed by us to influence the mistaken concepts. It is forbidden to discuss such matters! The object rules, the truths about it, and all suitable fresh inferences, are repressed. The parallels of the embryo are ignored; so are the likeness of girls and boys. The small differences of adults are exaggerated to crowd and color every nook of consciousness and natural empathies are thereby pushed into the limbo of the subconscious. We see a man, a woman; we have made ourselves unable to see two *alikes* in all but minor ways and even there, in *process*, similar

Lately we have discovered "sex" hormones male, female. To the disquietude of some, we have also learned that each sex possesses both and that no more than a slight preponderance of one over the other exists in either sex. With pragmatic zeal we have caused cockscombs to grow on hens and found that female hormones relieve to some degree cancerous conditions of the prostate. We have even somewhat changed personality by injection, and disoriented libido. We might have done better. We might, for instance, have wondered more what such facts *mean*.

It could plausibly be inferred (for instance) that the psychological nature of men and of women is not, intrinsically, as different

as the average person thinks—and all biology might be turned to evidence. It could be imagined that nature had no intention of causing the two sexes to take such opposed attitudes toward each other—that two very similar physiologies with one common end in view were not designed to sustain ideas of inferiority and superiority, of uncleanliness and hence of comparative cleanliness, of strength and weakness, modesty and valor, and the rest. Even though a division of the social responsibilities is implied by the *ultimate* differences, the *common aim* suggests that the duties of neither sex are lesser or greater and should be conjoined.

It must be assumed in consequence that all our inequities are the product of gross, calamitous, long-standing *error*. The motivative basis for such assumption is plain. When burgeoning "reason" ranged itself against the "blind" instinct of prior apes, and vanity was sired by success, the product (calling himself man and stripped of such automatic "divine" guidance as was available through instinct to a billion years of man's progenitors) became so entranced with himself that he never found enough objects of odious comparison to satisfy the greed of his inner conceit. He went to war with other men exactly like himself, always on the grounds of their "inferiority." Not satisfied even by that, he declared another war on the still-more-similar half of his own tribe—woman. She was necessary to him, so he could not exterminate her, but he put her in her place to give his own a more exalted seeming.

It is a hypothesis worthy of intense reflection—nowadays.

And woman's new place, essentially "inferior," was not in any way the place nature had created her to fill. For her, the game of life then perhaps became a game of wits and of revenge and mankind has not known any happiness since that hideous day.

The legend of Adam and Eve and their expulsion from "Eden" is an excellent allegory for what thus may truly have happened in the dawn ages. (Those psychologists who find legends to be the allegories of instinct, accounts of its evolution in man, will see that story in such a light—see it with depth and clarity.)

Note, first, that, since it was Adam who got the upper hand over Eve, the legend attributed the "original sin" to woman! In "Christian" civilization that pagan fable has been used to short the psychological circuit and slam the book. The old, universal "sin" *is* certainly man's and certainly *was* man's, its fearful consequences obtain everywhere without regard to the particular religion underlying any major culture. In that sense, it is fitting that that Saviour who is presumed to have died for our sins was a *man*—for the women were *innocent*. (What shall we say of them now?) And although women have abetted the ignominy—the blasphemy of the species by itself—they have done so with the pitiful motive of regaining some



favor amongst the men they had to love no matter what men imagined of them or did to them!

The atmosphere of such argument may seem rarefied. Let readers endeavor, in that case, to bear in mind they have never before come in contact with it, in all likelihood. The poisonous notions that pervade their minds are *all* they have known.

Doubting readers will not deny the *rage* that has characterized humanity in all its known periods. The fact that the males of the world, stricken by what is likely to prove a mortal blow, should, in the very moment of catastrophe, turn to hurling hydrogen bombs on one another is a proper criterion of that state. *Hatred* is man's principal characteristic, hostility and aggression are the chief manifestations of it in the objective realm, ideas of superiority and inferiority are the constant subjective shapes of the condition, and his history is the story of war. The urge to *love*—the real message of every sincere, sane messiah—is always ignored, save briefly or locally. By man, the greater appeal has *always* been found in the instrument of his own destruction: hate

It was this deadly wishing that the Greek tragedians took for granted. It was the evidence of this that made a man of such insight as Freud pessimistic about his species. Two thousand years ago—and yesterday—able minds have accepted the massive illusion as *inevitable*—taken it, even, for a “natural law”!

And the hatred cannot be denied. But a question can be asked.

If their sexes so revile each other, *how can a species love*? How, if one sex regards itself as superior, can it refrain from detesting the “inferior” sex? And how in the name of nature and of God can beings regarded as inferior by their mates bear toward those mates a whole affection? Creativeness, that ineffable First Principle of life, is not possible where the creators are at such odds, and have been for hundreds of generations. A hate of life is inevitable.

We were reared in that madness of our forefathers, and they in the insane evaluations of theirs, and thus it has gone, back to the caves and back to the forest fringe, until we have come so to adore our hateful composition that we found our religions upon it, incorporate it in all our virtues, make our laws from it, declare wars because of it, practice it by the wayside and in the seats of the mighty, and we cannot see behind it, or beyond it, or know what to do about it, because *we do not truly know any longer that we hate*, and most of us would rather perish than be reformed of the Truth. From that one illusion may stem all our sorrow; it may be, in solemn fact, the original sin.

We—male and female—are the same flesh and the flesh is beautiful. We have all the same organs, differing only in specialty. The same chemicals course in us both. When we love each other it is the

same love. When we lie together we are in solemn truth that One. And until men made it so, in prestigious excesses of egotism, no such thing existed as a woman and no such thing existed as a man. The fact ought to be exceedingly plain today, since, without females, we males are in a lingering death. We do not exist—alone. We cannot.

A "person" is a-man-plus-a-woman, with one or the other absent, there is no person. Hate is still possible but not love. Destruction is still easy but creativity is done for. In the world we so recently inhabited, where woman existed and the pride of man has sullied all, we had reached the very edge of that circumstance in which we now find ourselves! The soul of woman had long ago been slaughtered; our women were spiritually dead—so we were dead also. We were both dead sexually; the mind of man had grown as morbidly demented as it was gigantic; the long paroxysms of instinct that our harsh history exhibits were approaching some final masochism; life to nearly all of us was inner anathema.

In a mystical sense it might be said that, since the women vanished, they were probably spared (owing to their innocence of original blame) from the dreary spectacle of slow death that now confronts the cruel and idiot descendants of the cruel and idiot sponsors of the blight ourselves.

The sin was shame, as the legend implies. But not the hateful shame we bear today. The sin was to convert sexuality itself to a shame and, in the dire doing, to shame women especially. We have (inevitably) taken the very opposite of the true position in defining the "original" sin. Our common sexuality, which was intended to be the ecstasy of our species, as a flower is the sexual organ and the ecstasy of a plant, was turned to shame—in order that we would appear (to our conceited human selves) loftier than other beasts, better even than nature, superior to law, even to God as men, so far, have invented Him.

Those advanced psychologists and psychologically informed philosophers who deal with the relationship of mythology to instinct will find—as I said—in the fundamental ideology of that "Old Testament religion" which underlies this civilization a clear "statement" of a dawn-age double error which has never been corrected. To some of these thinkers, the "Garden of Eden" is an archetypal memory of man's "peace of mind" in the days when pure instinct guided him. His effort to "sanctify" himself by shaming instinct, and the sexual instincts especially, has left him with a second archetypal memory; it appears in his legend of being driven from the Garden. What that "means" is, merely, that there exists in man an indelible, *protoplasmic* recollection of a happier estate, of a blunder (sin), and of the stemming of all subsequent woe from that first error. What it "means," again, is that the back-brain of man—perhaps the

very spinal column—recalls *and turns into legend* the fact that he has cut off his consciousness of the instinctuality of all life and now suffers for the unwarranted, arrogant deed.

The story of Genesis is reflected not only in other old legends but also in the universal hope of “hereafters” which will restore the estate that is man’s “due.” The ubiquity and vehemence of human beliefs in humanesque hereafters becomes, by such logic, a measure of the strength of instinct still at work in *genus homo*!

Freud was able to penetrate the ageless layers of credulity laid upon the error, to the degree that he saw, appraised and proved the *sexual* basis of Western, Christian neurosis. He did not see the still-broader frame of reference from which the situation rose—the development of ego-repressed instincts into myths, legends, and at length into formal religions. That was Jung’s vision. Freud, however penetrated a curtain of *time* when he showed that most of modern man’s neuroses and psychoses derive from misinterpretations of the relation of id to ego and to the “superego.” It was the first great clue to the “wherefore” of the Toynbeeian rise-and-fall of civilization. With Jung’s formulation of the Freudian discovery into a timeless whole, the means for a renaissance like that of the awakening of the physical sciences become available. It has not much been used, or even studied, as I have said.

Why not?

It took man centuries to learn to apply honesty to objects; even today only certain men, called scientists, are honest altogether, and then only where certain objects are concerned. But by such means we have found out *what things are*! Is it inconceivable that men (had they yet the chance) might someday apply the identical honesty to the subject? Is the definition of man this: he is an everlasting liar to himself about himself? Or would he someday learn—painfully, as he learned the “scientific method”—also to be honest with himself? And would such honesty begin to unlock the greater mystery, the mystery of *Why*? I believe it would. I believe it is our “sin” that prevents our sciences from asking “Why?” There is no *reason* we should not ask—none to expect the answer is inexplicably denied to those who seek. And the field for the inquiry doubtless lies not amongst comets or bacteria or flying mesons—but *within ourselves*.

Such is the substance of my effort to conclude this report with a personal “contribution.” I realize that what I have offered is at best but ground for speculation. It is my hope that the ground will be examined, the speculation attempted. For we can be assured that the physical scientists are doing the utmost of which man is capable to resolve the shocking riddle of our days. We can be sure that those psychological scientists who are able are also investing their energies and their best thought in the same effort. But they are very few.

Perhaps all I have expressed is the wish that more men of imagination, courage and logic would apply their minds in the subjective field.

I do not intend to suggest, by recommending psychological research, that the disappearance of females is illusion. I do not mean to imply that the sad scenery of our times is the result of some collective, hypnogogic fantasy. Such *may* be the case, and if it is, not the "physical" but the "psychological" sciences will offer a better approach to what seems so real now, and so terrible, so tragic. I do not wish it inferred, either, that I regard our wretched status as a "punishment" of Nature or God—the working of some unknown, fabulous cosmic Law. What I wish to leave is an impression that we are disoriented in our minds toward sexuality—toward love—and in other ways. Even such a presentation—a philosopher's poor best—may be regarded as out of place in a "factual" report. To all who so regard it, my apologies. To the rest, let us dwell on the sensation of love, imbuing it with all our new objective knowledge, to see what new forms this act may awaken in the mind.

We have lost everything. With love, with truth, this might not have been

## ATHENS, GREECE, 1942

VAHAN KRIKORIAN GREGORY



A door opened a few minutes after dawn. A bicycle wheel was thrust out, followed by a thin young Armenian boy. His bony ten-year-old brother placed a cap on the bicycle seat, and Ara put it on. A four-year-old boy, naked except for an undershirt, jumped from the doorway, hugged Ara's leg, and darted back into the doorway. His mother, who had once carried traditional fat, hotly kissed his cheek. The father leaned from the upstairs window, his face bandaged. The young man waved. "Goodbye, Reverend," he said. Ara straddled the bicycle and rode off.

The bicycle was British built. Ara had bought it from an English soldier at the beginning of the war, when money was still used for such things. At that time he had paid 7000 drachmas for it. The bicycle was now worth billions or trillions of that same currency. Anything of value whatsoever was worth a billion drachmas. One traded in concrete goods, now, since the convenience of paper money was long ago destroyed.

Ara carried a pair of silk stockings in his pocket, for trade with the farmers in Portorefti, a farm town near the sea 70 kilometers to the south. He wanted to purchase raisins.

People were on the boulevard already, as Ara emerged from his street. The night's dead were not yet cleared away. Ahead he saw a girl, whose love he had bought for a raisin three nights before. Approaching, he nodded. She stopped walking and stared at him. Her eyes widened and her mouth dropped open. She fell, her eyes upon him almost until her face struck the pavement.

Vahan Krikorian Gregory, "Athens, Greece, 1942," originally published in *The Armenian Review*. Reprinted by permission of the author.

"I am the last person she ever saw," Ara thought, peddling past the lifeless body. His mind dwelt lightly upon the distinction she had accorded him, by sharing the realization of her death. She knew she had died. Her eyes had told him. And she was one who had wanted to live.

She had been pretty. But love was not hard to find anymore so one girl more or less could make no difference. He pitied her, but his pity was born of the hope that he would not know that he had died. As she had known. Life would spare him that much, at least. Of course, life would spare him that much. He would die in his sleep one of these nights. It was a thirty-sixty chance against him, but he would have that much luck. Why should he die in the daytime while awake when he could die in his sleep and not be aware of that experience?

Today was his final opportunity to obtain raisins and get them home. Pynoos would otherwise give the agency of the silk stockings to someone else, to a Greek, who did not have the disadvantage of being a member of a minority race in a prejudiced country. A Greek would be able to resist somewhat the pilferings of the soldiers. Were Ara to defend his raisins, the soldiers would be amused to shoot him in the face.

It was important to bring some raisins home tonight so that they could live two more days—when they would soon be dead anyway. He could not ride 140 kilometers a day on a walnut a day, or a slice of tomato, or three raisins. He had been doing it for weeks, but it couldn't continue. His luck would soon run out and there would be no more food at all.

Ara had once thought he could never live without at least one balanced meal a day. And, he thought, he had once wondered if he would ever make love to a girl. He had wondered what he would be when he grew up! He had once thought war glorious. He had even thought of being Christian.

Pynoos had allowed Ara to handle the trading for him from respect to the Reverend, but Pynoos also had a family to feed. Ara had been unsuccessful for two days running, and both families had not eaten.

Out of the city proper the road became yellow dirt. His eyes traversed the distance to the furthest point of the yellow needle, and, remaining there, progressed along with his speed. He looked for a dark spot, a marring of the surface color that would indicate something lying in the dust. The German army trucks sometimes ran over a snake. Were he to find a snake the immediate strain would be lifted. The 'Carabineros' might take the raisins, but they would laugh at a snake.

A little shadow appeared at the edge of the road. He stopped and

found a walnut. Saliva flooded his mouth as he squeezed the nut between his palms. Then he stopped and slipped it into his pocket. He must take it home. If he could not purchase raisins, or could not get home with them, at least he could offer a walnut. But the walnut may be rotten, he thought. He withdrew it and studied it. It was old and dirty, and perhaps rotten. He could not go home and offer the nut as substitute for a quarter-pound of raisins, then to find it rotten. It would be better to learn of its contents before arriving home. He would open it now and see. But, with it lying open and ripe in his pocket, would he be able to withstand the temptation? He was hungry! He deserved some energy! Perhaps it would be better to leave it closed in his pocket, allowing the fear that it may be rotten to deter him from opening it. If the trip proved successful, then he could eat it before starting home.

He rode hard away, the walnut in his pocket.

Tears came again. They blew through his beard. He tasted the salt in the corners of his mouth.

America is getting beaten. England is getting beaten. Just the Germans and Italians. Conditions would not improve for years. Today he had to get raisins. Tomorrow he would have to get raisins. And tomorrow, and tomorrow. He gazed over the sides of the tall mountains. Everyone well hidden. Someone should pick him off for amusement.

Maybe he would get a fish. Or find one.

Little brother hugged my leg. Hasn't even got a bottom when he walks around naked. And Dad! Sermonizing to a dead church.

Trees, grass, rocks, and mountains. Portorefti, 50 kilometers, 40 kilometers.

Ara went directly to the farmer with whom he had made a trade yesterday. The old farmhouse and its dried arbors were within hearing of the Aegean. It was built all of wood, finely built, but the white paint was weathering and flaking. The doghouses were empty. The old man was standing in the driveway watching Ara approach.

"Hello, old man," Ara said. "They stole my raisins yesterday. Can I have some more? I'll hide them up the seat of my pants, today. Ha ha."

"What do you have boy?"

"The same. Silk stockings." He could not even say 'fine' silk stockings anymore. It was stupid.

"But I told you yesterday, I need no more silk stockings. I have to *save* my raisins. I can't give a quarter-pound of raisins for those! This is no time for silk!"

"Give me less, then!" he said, tight-lipped. He no longer allowed the cheapness of insistence to deter him from making every effort to obtain food. This was no time for civilized decencies, either. He'd

take whatever he got and go straight home and never bother coming back. They'd eat the raisins and soon die. He had said this a great many times, but, really, this was the last, he swore.

"No, boy, I can't really spare any more raisins. Please go. I can't afford to help you."

"Do you have any fish?"

"Yes, but I must save it for shoes. Maybe someone will bring me shoes. How is the Reverend?"

"He was beaten up last night. He had two fishes from Sparta, but they caught him in the freight yards. All that way and they catch him in the freight yards!"

"Look, I'll give you two handfuls, but don't bring me any more silk stockings!"

"All right. Hurry, please. Thank you."

He followed the old farmer into a low, white barn. It smelled richly of raisins inside. Ara roughly controlled an impulse to retch. The farmer opened a bin and placed two handfuls into Ara's pockets. Then he reached back into the bin and handed Ara two raisins for himself. Ara threw one into his mouth, sucked on it for a moment, poised his teeth, and crushed. He threw the other one into his mouth.

"Thank you very much, old man," he said.

The old man nodded.

Ara strode back to his bicycle. He knew he should have gone around to solicit other farmers before accepting so low an offer. Maybe he might have gotten a half-pound. But he could not have done that.

Ara rode slowly toward the shore. The sun was midway now. He parked the bike against the cable fence and climbed over. He walked through the sand toward the water. Scanning the northern and southern stretches of sand, he decided to walk down the southerly direction. He walked for half an hour but found no fish. He turned and arrived presently back to his bicycle. He walked the same distance in the northerly direction, but found nothing. He returned. Though there were never any crabs in the sand at this time of year, he took off his shoes and waded into the waves, digging his hands into the back-wash. There were no crabs. He sat in the sand beside his shoes and gazed at his thighs. His short pants were very loose. His thighs were almost as thin as his calves. He recalled that when he was five and in the first grade, his thighs had been thick and had flattened against the chairs when he sat. There had been beauty in the legs, then.

He reached into his pocket and withdrew a raisin, placing it on his tongue. He chewed very slowly. Then he took a handful from his pocket and ate them slowly. He cleaned out both pockets, taking the last handful in one swallow.

Minutes later he vomited.



He picked up his shoes and moved a few feet away. Then, bare-footed, he walked down into the wet sand and began building a castle. An hour before sunset he stamped down the walls, put his shoes on and went back to his bicycle. He started for the farmhouse where he had gotten the raisins at noon.

"What's the matter, boy?" the old farmer asked.

"Will you give me a fish for my shoes?"

The farmer stared at the shoes. "What happened to your raisins?"

"I ate them," Ara said.

The farmer stamped and shook his white head and looked at the ground.

Ara took one shoe off and handed it to the farmer.

"It's worn," the farmer said.

"Fix it. It will last," Ara said.

"I'm sorry, boy, I can't give you a fish for these shoes."

"What'll you give me, then?" Ara asked eagerly.

"But they are no good," the farmer said.

"Yes they are," Ara insisted. "I can wear them for months, yet."

The farmer called one of his sons. The shoe was too small for the boy. The farmer called a younger son. The shoe was large, but comfortable.

"There," Ara said. "See? You *can* use it! Let me have a fish." The farmer was soft-hearted, Ara knew. But he could not go back to Athens with nothing.

"Boy, boy, I can't give you a fish for these shoes. They will soon be dust."

"Oh, give me something for them." He started to cry.

"How old are you now?" the farmer asked.

"Fifteen."

"In six years you will be a man. The war will be over. I'll give you some raisins."

They returned to the barn and the farmer again filled Ara's pockets.

Ara stopped on the road to Athens just before it became dark. He cracked open the walnut shell. It was not rotten. He ate the nut. He remained there, massaging the soles of his feet. It was difficult to peddle without shoes. He took two raisins from his pocket and started along the road again. Soon it was so dark he had to get off and push the bicycle. The moon rose presently and he was able to see the road again. He peddled fast.

Then he was crying. Each member of his family would die slowly within the next weeks. He withdrew more raisins, trying to eat them slowly so he would not vomit. He cried with all his strength and began to yell between sobs. He stopped the bike, sat at the side of the road and ate all the raisins. He lay there, sobbing and shouting.

Then he heard the noise of motors. Looking up, he saw a line of lights moving toward him. It was a German troop convoy. He leaped to his bicycle and rode hard toward them. The rumbling increased and became the individual sounds of motors. Ara approached the lead vehicle and rode straight for a point between the two headlights. The truck screeched to a stop before Ara reached it. Ara tried, then, to stop, but he lightly struck the truck's bumper and tumbled foolishly to the ground. He rose, picked the bicycle up and stood staring at the truck's radiator. The Captain roared toward him. He grabbed Ara's arm and yanked it. "What's the matter? Do you wish to die? What's the matter?"

Ara remained calm.

"Don't hold up a convoy because you want to die. You don't want to die, do you?"

"My family," Ara said softly, and then louder, "What will they do without food? I will never be able to get any more food!"

"Something will turn up!" the Captain said. "You don't want to die, do you?" He yanked Ara's arm again.

Ara sighed and gazed past the Captain's shoulder at the line of waiting trucks. The Captain's hand loosed its grip. "Good boy," the Captain said. "Now go home. The war won't last much longer."

Ara started off on his bicycle again. He had been too obvious, allowing the truck time to stop. But there were more trucks. He could cut quickly in behind one and fall before another. He rode very slowly, until the line of trucks had again gained full speed. Looking ahead, he chose the truck he would fall before. It was happiness, now. But he let the truck he had chosen go by. He chose another, and allowed it to pass. But there were more trucks.

Soon he was standing in the middle of the road, watching the last truck recede in the darkness.

# THE MAN IN THE BROOKS BROTHERS SHIRT

MARY McCARTHY



The new man who came into the club car was coatless. He was dressed in gray trousers and a green shirt of expensive material that had what seemed to be the figure "2" embroidered in darker green on the sleeve. His tie matched the green of the monogram, and his face, which emerged rather sharply from this tasteful symphony in cool colors, was blush pink. The greater part of his head appeared to be pink, also, though actually toward the back there was a good deal of closely cropped pale-gray hair that harmonized with his trousers. He looked, she decided, like a middle-aged baby, like a young pig, like something in a seed catalogue. In any case, he was plainly Out of the Question, and the hope that had sprung up, as for some reason it always did, with the sound of a new step soft on the flowered Pullman carpet, died a new death. Already the trip was half over. They were now several hours out of Omaha; nearly all the Chicago passengers had put in an appearance, and still there was no one, no one at all. She must not mind, she told herself, the trip West was of no importance; yet she felt a curious, shamefaced disappointment, as if she had given a party and no guests had come.

She turned again to the lady on her left, her *vis-à-vis* at breakfast, a person with dangling earrings, a cigarette holder, and a lorgnette, who was somebody in the New Deal and carried about with her a typewritten report of the hearings of some committee which she was

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anxious to discuss. The man in the green shirt crowded himself into a love seat directly opposite, next to a young man with glasses and loud socks who was reading Vincent Sheean's *Personal History*. Sustaining her end of a well-bred, well-informed, liberal conversation, she had an air of perfect absorption and earnestness, yet she became aware, without ever turning her head, that the man across the way had decided to pick her up. Full of contempt for the man, for his coatlessness, for his color scheme, for his susceptibility, for his presumption, she nevertheless allowed her voice to rise a little in response to him. The man countered by turning to his neighbor and saying something excessively audible about Vincent Sheean. The four voices, answering each other, began to give an antiphonal effect, Vincent Sheean was a fine fellow, she heard him pronounce, he could vouch for it, he knew him *personally*. The bait was crude, she reflected. She would have preferred the artificial fly to the angleworm, but still. . . . After all, he might have done worse, judged by eternal standards, Sheean might not be much, but in the cultural atmosphere of the Pullman car, Sheean was a titan. Moreover, if one judged the man by his intention, one could not fail to be touched. He was doing his best to *please* her. He had guessed from her conversation that she was an intellectual, and was placing the name of Sheean as a humble offering at her feet. And the simple vulgarity of the offering somehow enhanced its value; it was like one of those home-made cakes with Paris-green icing that she used to receive on her birthday from her colored maid.

Her own neighbor must finally have noticed a certain displacement of attention, for she got up announcing that she was going in to lunch, and her tone was stiff with reproof and disappointment so that she seemed, for a moment, this rococo suffragette, like a nun who discovers that her favorite novice lacks the vocation. As she tugged open the door to go out, a blast of hot Nebraska air rushed into the club car, where the air-cooling system had already broken down.

The girl in the seat had an impulse to follow her. It would surely be cooler in the diner, where there was not so much glass. If she stayed and let the man pick her up, it would be a question of eating lunch together, and there would be a little quarrel about the check, and if she let him win she would have him on her hands all the way to Sacramento. And he was certain to be tiresome. That emblem in Gothic script spelled out the self-made man. She could foresee the political pronouncements, the pictures of the wife and children, the hand squeezed under the table. Nothing worse than that, fortunately, for the conductors on those trains were always very strict. Still, the whole thing would be so vulgar, one would expose oneself so to the derision of the other passengers. It was true, she was always wanting something exciting and romantic to happen; but it was not really

romantic to be the-girl-who-sits-in-the-club-car-and-picks-up-men. She closed her eyes with a slight shudder some predatory view of herself had been disclosed for an instant. She heard her aunt's voice saying, "I don't know why you make yourself so cheap," and "It doesn't pay to let men think you're easy." Then she was able to open her eyes again, and smile a little, patronizingly, for of course it hadn't worked out that way. The object of her trip was, precisely, to tell her aunt in Portland that she was going to be married again.

She settled down in her seat to wait and began to read an advance copy of a new novel. When the man would ask her what-that-book-is-you're-so-interested-in (she had heard the question before), she would be able to reply in a tone so simple and friendly that it could not give offense, "Why, you probably haven't heard of it. It's not out yet." (Yet, she thought, she had not brought the book along for purposes of ostentation it had been given her by a publisher's assistant who saw her off at the train, and now she had nothing else to read. So, really, she could not be accused of insincerity. Unless it could be that her whole way of life had been assumed for purposes of ostentation, and the book, which looked accidental, was actually part of that larger and truly deliberate scheme. If it had not been this book, it would have been something else, which would have served equally well to impress a pink middle-aged stranger.)

The approach, when it came, was more unorthodox than she had expected. The man got up from his seat and said, "Can I talk to you?" Her retort, "What have you got to say?" rang off-key in her own ears. It was as if Broadway had answered Indiana. For a moment the man appeared to be taken aback, but then he laughed. "Why, I don't know, nothing special. We can talk about that book, I guess."

She liked him, and with her right hand made a gesture that meant, "All right, go on." The man examined the cover. "I haven't heard about this. It must be new."

"Yes." Her reply had more simplicity in it than she would have thought she could achieve. "It isn't out yet. This is an advance copy." "I've read something else by this fellow. He's good."

"You have?" cried the girl in a sharp, suspicious voice. It was incredible that this well-barbered citizen should not only be familiar with but have a taste for the work of an obscure revolutionary novelist. On the other hand, it was incredible that he should be lying. The artless and offhand manner in which he pronounced the novelist's name indicated no desire to shine, indicated in fact that he placed no value on that name, that it was to him a name like Hervey Allen or Arthur Brisbane or Westbrook Pegler or any other. Two alternatives presented themselves: either the man belonged to that extraordinary class of readers who have perfect literary digestions, who can devour anything printed, retaining what suits them, eliminating what does not,

and liking all impartially, because, since they take what they want from each, they are always actually reading the same book (she had had a cousin who was like that about the theater, and she remembered how her aunt used to complain, saying, "It's no use asking Cousin Florence whether the show at the stock company is any good this week; Cousin Florence has never seen a bad play")—either that, or else the man had got the name confused and was really thinking of some popular writer all the time

Still, the assertion, shaky as it was, had given him status with her. It was as if he had spoken a password, and with a greater sense of assurance and propriety, she went on listening to his talk. His voice was rather rich and dark, the accent was Middle Western, but underneath the nasalities there was something soft and furry that came from the South. He lived in Cleveland, he told her, but his business kept him on the go a good deal, he spent nearly half his time in New York

"You do?" she exclaimed, her spirits rising. "What *is* your business?" Her original view of him had already begun to dissolve, and it now seemed to her that the instant he had entered the club car she had sensed that he was no ordinary provincial entrepreneur.

"I'm a traveling salesman," he replied genially

In a moment she recognized that this was a joke, but not before he had caught her look of absolute dismay and panic. He leaned toward her and laughed "If it sounds any better to you," he said, "I'm in the steel business."

"It doesn't," she replied, recovering herself, making her words prim with political disapproval. But he *knew*; she had given herself away, he had trapped her features in an expression of utter snobbery.

"You're a pink, I suppose," he said, as if he had noticed nothing. "It'd sound better to you if I said I was a burglar."

"Yes," she acknowledged, with a comic air of frankness, and they both laughed. Much later, he gave her a business card that said he was an executive in Little Steel, but he persisted in describing himself as a traveling salesman, and she saw at last that it was an accident that the joke had turned on her—the joke was a wry, humble, clownish one that he habitually turned on himself.

When he asked if she would join him in a drink before lunch, she accepted readily. "Let's go into the diner, though. It may be cooler"

"I've got a bottle of whiskey in my compartment. I *know* it's cool there."

Her face stiffened. A compartment was something she had not counted on. But she did not know (she never had known) how to refuse. She felt bitterly angry with the man for having exposed her—so early—to this supreme test of femininity, a test she was bound to fail, since she would either go into the compartment, not wanting to

(and he would know this and feel contempt for her malleability), or she would stay out of the compartment, wanting to have gone in (and he would know this, too, and feel contempt for her timidity).

The man looked at her face.

"Don't worry," he said in a kind, almost fatherly voice. "It'll be perfectly proper. I promise to leave the door open." He took her arm and gave it a slight, reassuring squeeze, and she laughed out loud, delighted with him for having, as she thought, once again understood and spared her.

In the compartment, which was off the club car, it *was* cooler. The highballs, gold in the glasses, tasted, as her own never did, the way they looked in the White Rock advertisements. There was something about the efficiency with which his luggage, in brown calf, was disposed in that small space, about the white coat of the black waiter who kept coming in with fresh ice and soda, about the chicken sandwiches they finally ordered for lunch, that gave her that sense of ritualistic "rightness" that the Best People are supposed to bask in. The open door contributed to this sense: it was exactly as if they were drinking in a show window, for nobody went by who did not peer in, and she felt that she could discern envy, admiration, and censure in the quick looks that were shot at her. The man sat at ease, unconscious of these attentions, but she kept her back straight, her shoulders high with decorum, and let her bare arms rise and fall now and then in short parabolas of gesture.

But if for the people outside she was playing the great lady, for the man across the table she was the Bohemian Girl. It was plain that she was a revelation to him, that he had never under the sun seen anyone like her. And he was quizzing her about her way of life with the intense, unashamed, wondering curiosity of a provincial seeing for the first time the sights of a great but slightly decadent city. Answering his questions she was able to see herself through his eyes (brown eyes, which were his only good feature, but which somehow matched his voice and thus enhanced the effect, already striking, of his having been put together by a good tailor). What she got from his view of her was a feeling of uniqueness and identity, a feeling she had once had when, at twenty, she had come to New York and had her first article accepted by a liberal weekly, but which had slowly been rubbed away by four years of being on the inside of the world that had looked magic from Portland, Oregon. Gradually, now, she was becoming very happy, for she knew for sure in this compartment that she was beautiful and gay and clever, and worldly and innocent, serious and frivolous, capricious and trustworthy, witty and sad, bad and really good, all mixed up together, all at the same time. She could feel the power running in her, like a medium on a particularly good night.

As these multiple personalities bloomed on the single stalk of her

ego, a great glow of charity, like the flush of life, suffused her. This man, too, must be admitted into the mystery; this stranger must be made to open and disclose himself like a Japanese water flower. With a messianic earnestness she began to ask him questions, and though at first his answers displayed a sort of mulish shyness ("I'm just a traveling salesman," "I'm a suburban businessman," "I'm an economic royalist"), she knew that sooner or later he would tell her the truth, the rock-bottom truth, and was patient with him. It was not the first time she had "drawn a man out"—the phrase puckered her mouth, for it had never seemed like that to her. Certain evenings spent in bars with men she had known for half an hour came back to her, she remembered the beautiful frankness with which the cards on each side were laid on the table till love became a wonderful slow game of double solitaire and nothing that happened afterwards counted for anything beside those first few hours of self-revelation. Now as she put question after question she felt once more like a happy burglar twirling the dial of a well-constructed safe, listening for the locks to click and reveal the combination. When she asked him what the emblem on his shirt stood for, unexpectedly the door flew open.

"It was a little officers' club we had in the war," he said. "The four deuces, we called ourselves." He paused, and then went on irrelevantly, "I get these shirts at Brooks Brothers. They'll put the emblem on free if you order the shirts custom-made. I always order a dozen at a time. I get everything at Brooks Brothers except ties and shoes. Leonie thinks it's stodgy of me."

Leonie was his wife. They had a daughter, little Angela, and two sons, little Frank and little Joe, and they lived in a fourteen-room house in the Gates Mills section of Cleveland. Leonie was a home girl, quite different from Eleanor, who had been his first big love and was now a decorator in New York. Leonie loved her house and children. Of course, she was interested in culture, too, particularly the theater, and there were always a lot of young men from the Cleveland Playhouse hanging around her, but then she was a Vassar girl, and you had to expect a woman to have different interests from a man.

Leonie was a Book-of-the-Month Club member and she also subscribed to the two liberal weeklies. "She'll certainly be excited," the man said, grinning with pleasure, "when she hears I met somebody from the *Liberal* on this trip. But she'll never be able to understand why you wasted your time talking to poor old Bill."

The girl smiled at him.

"I *like* to talk to you," she said, suppressing the fact that nothing on earth would have induced her to talk to Leonie.

"I read an article in those magazines once in a while," he continued dreamily. "Once in a while they have something good, but on the whole they're too wishy-washy for me. Now that I've had this



visit with you, though, I'll read your magazine every week, trying to guess which of those things in the front you wrote"

"I'm *never* wishy-washy," said the girl, laughing. "But is your wife radical?"

"Good Lord, no! She calls herself a liberal, but actually I'm more of a radical than Leonie is."

"How do you mean?"

"Well, take the election. I'm going to vote for Landon because it's expected of me, and my vote won't put him in"

"But you're really for Roosevelt?"

"No," said the man, a little impatiently, "I don't like Roosevelt either. I don't like a man that's always hedging his bets. Roosevelt's an old woman. Look at the way he's handling these CIO strikes. He doesn't have the guts to stick up for Lewis, and he doesn't have the sense to stay out of the whole business." He leaned across the table and added, almost in a whisper, "You know who I'd like to vote for?"

The girl shook her head.

"Norman Thomas!"

"But you're a steel man!" said the girl.

The man nodded.

"Nobody knows how I feel, not even Leonie." He paused to think. "I was in the last war," he said finally, "and I had a grand time. I was in the cavalry and there weren't any horses. But they made me a captain and decorated me. After the armistice we were stationed in Cologne, and we got hold of a Renault and every week end we'd drive all night so we could have a day on the Riviera." He chuckled to himself. "But the way I look at it, there's a new war coming and it isn't going to be like that. God Almighty, we didn't hate the Germans!"

"And now?"

"You wait," he said. "Last time it was supposed to be what you people call an ideological war—for democracy and all that. But it wasn't. That was just advertising. You liberals have all of a sudden found out that it was Mr. Morgan's war. You think that's terrible. But let me tell you that Mr. Morgan's war was a hell of a lot nicer to fight than this new one will be. Because this one will be ideological, and it'll be too damned serious. You'll wish that you had the international bankers and munitions men to stop the fight when things get too rough. I'd like to see this country stay out of it. That's why I'm for Thomas."

"You're a very interesting man," said the girl, tears coming to her eyes, perhaps because of the whisky. "I've never known anyone like you. You're not the kind of businessman I write editorials against."

"You people are crazy, though," he said genially. "You're never going to get anywhere in America with that proletariat stuff. Every

workingman wants to live the way I do. He doesn't want me to live the way he does. You people go at it from the wrong end. I remember a Socialist organizer came down fifteen years ago into Southern Illinois. I was in the coal business then, working for my first girl's father. This Socialist was a nice fellow. . . ."

His voice was dreamy again, but there was an undercurrent of excitement in it. It was as if he were reviving some buried love affair, or, rather, some wispy young *tendresse* that had never come to anything. The Socialist organizer had been a distant connection of his first girl's, the two men had met and had some talks, later the Socialist had been run out of town, the man had stood aloof, neither helping nor hindering.

"I wonder what's become of him," he said finally. "In jail somewhere, I guess."

"Oh, no," said the girl. "You don't understand modern life. He's a big bureaucrat in the CIO. Just like a businessman, only not so well paid."

The man looked puzzled and vaguely sad. "He had a lot of nerve," he murmured, then added quickly, in a loud, bumptious tone, "But you're all nuts!"

The girl bit her lips. The man's vulgarity was undeniable. For some time now she had been attempting (for her own sake) to whitewash him, but the crude raw material would shine through in spite of her. It had been possible for her to remain so long in the compartment only on the basis of one of two assumptions, both of them literary: (a) that the man was a frustrated socialist, (b) that he was a frustrated man of sensibility, a kind of Sherwood Anderson character. But the man's own personality kept popping up, perversely, like a jack-in-the-box, to confound these theories. The most one could say was that the man was frustrated. She had hoped to "give him back to himself," but these fits of self-assertion on his part discouraged her by making her feel that there was nothing very good to give. She had, moreover, a suspicion that his lapses were deliberate, even malicious, that the man knew what she was about and why she was about it, and had made up his mind to thwart her. She felt a Take-me-as-I-am, an I'll-drag-you-down-to-my-level challenge behind his last words. It was like the resistance of the patient to the psychoanalyst, of the worker to the Marxist: she was offering to release him from the chains of habit, and he was standing up and clanking those chains comfortably and impudently in her face. On the other hand, she *knew*, just as the analyst knows, just as the Marxist knows, that somewhere in his character there was the need of release and the humility that would accept aid—and there was, furthermore, a kindness and a general co-operativeness which would make him pretend to be a little better than he was, if that would help her to think better of herself.

For the thing was, the man and the little adventure of being with him had a kind of human appeal that she kept giving in to against her judgment. *She liked him*. Why, it was impossible to say. The attraction was not sexual, for, as the whisky went down in the bottle, his face took on a more and more porcine look that became so distasteful to her that she could hardly meet his gaze, but continued to talk to him with a large, remote stare, as if he were an audience of several hundred people. Whenever she did happen to catch his eye, to really look at him, she was as disconcerted as an actor who sees a human expression answering him from beyond the footlights. It was not his air of having money, either, that drew her to him, though that, she thought humorously, helped, but it hindered too. It was partly the homespun quality (the use of the word, "visit," for example, as a verb meaning "talk," took her straight back to her childhood and to her father, gray-slippered, in a brown leather chair), and partly of course his plain delight in her, which had in it more shrewdness than she had thought at first, for, though her character was new and inexplicable to him, in a gross sense he was clearly a connoisseur of women. But beyond all this, she had glimpsed in him a vein of sympathy and understanding that made him available to any human being, just as he was, apparently, available as a reader to any novelist—and this might proceed, not, as she had assumed out in the club car, from stupidity, but from a restless and perennially hopeful curiosity.

Actually, she decided, it was the combination of provincialism and adventurousness that did the trick. This man *was* the frontier, though the American frontier had closed, she knew, forever, somewhere out in Oregon in her father's day. Her father, when that door had shut, had remained on the inside. In his youth, as she had learned to her surprise, from some yellowed newspaper clippings her aunt had forgotten in an old bureau drawer, he had been some kind of wildcat radical, full of workmen's compensation laws and state ownership of utilities, but he had long ago hardened into a corporation lawyer, Eastern style. She remembered how once she had challenged him with those clippings, thinking to shame him with the betrayal of ideals and how calmly he had retorted, "Things were different then." "But you fought the *railroads*," she had insisted. "And now you're their lawyer." "You had to fight the railroads in those days," he had answered innocently, and her aunt had put in, with her ineffable plebeian sententiousness, "Your father always stands for what is right." But she saw now that her father had honestly perceived no contradiction between the two sets of attitudes, which was the real proof that it was not he, so much as the times, that had changed.

Yet this man she was sitting with had somehow survived, like a lonely dinosaur, from that former day. It was not even a true survival,

for if he was, as he said, forty-one, that would make him thirty years younger than her father, and he would be barely able to recall the Golden Age of American imperialism, to which, nevertheless, he plainly belonged. Looking at him, she thought of other young empires and recalled the Roman busts in the Metropolitan, marble faces of businessmen, shockingly rugged and modern and recognizable after the smooth tranquillity of the Greeks. Those early businessmen had been omnivorous, too, great readers, eaters, travelers, collectors, and, at the beginning, provincial also, small-town men newly admitted into world-citizenship, faintly uneasy but feeling their oats.

In the course of this analysis she had glided all the way from aversion to tenderness. She saw the man now as a man without a country, and felt a desire to reinstate him. But where? The best she could do was communicate to him a sense of his own isolation and grandeur. She could ensconce him in the dignity of sadness.

Meanwhile, the man had grown almost boisterously merry. It was late afternoon, the lunch things had long ago been taken away, and the bottle was nearly empty. Outside the flat yellow farm land went by, comfortably dotted with haystacks, the drought and the cow bones strewn over the Dust Bowl seemed remote as a surrealist painting. Other passengers still paused to look in at the open door on their way to the club car, but the girl was no longer fully aware of them: they existed, as it were, only to give the perspective, to deepen that warm third dimension that had been established within the compartment. The man was lit up with memories of the war, droll stories of horseplay and drinking parties, a hero who was drowned while swimming in a French river, trips to Paris, Notre Dame, and target practice in the Alps. It had been, she could see, an extension of college days, a sort of lower-middle-class Grand Tour, a wonderful male roughhouse that had left a man such as this with a permanent homesickness for fraternity and a loneliness that no stag party could quite ease.

"I suppose I'm boring you," said the man, still smiling to himself, "but—it's a funny thing to say—I haven't had such a good time since the war. So that you remind me of it, and I can't stop talking. I don't know why."

"I know," she said, full of gentle omniscience. (This was her best side, and she knew it. But did that spoil it, keep it from being good?) "It's because you've made a new friend, and you probably haven't made one for twenty years, not since the war. Nobody does, after they're grown-up."

"Maybe so," said the man. "Getting married, no matter how many times you do it, isn't the same thing. If you even *think* you'd like to marry a girl, you have to start lying to her. It's a law of

nature, I guess. You have to protect yourself. I don't mean about cheating—that's small potatoes. . . ."

A meditative look absorbed his face. "Jesus Christ," he said, "I don't even *know* Leonie any more, and vice versa, but that's the way it ought to be. A man doesn't want his wife to understand him. That's not her job. Her job is to have a nice house and nice kids and give good parties he can have his friends to. If Leonie understood me, she wouldn't be able to do that. Probably we'd both go to pot."

Tears came to her eyes again. The man's life and her own life seemed unutterably tragic.

"I was in love with my husband," she said. "We understood each other. He never had a thought he didn't tell me."

"But you got a divorce," said the man. "Somebody must have misunderstood somebody else *somewhere* along the line."

"Well," she admitted, "maybe he *didn't* understand *me* so well. He was awfully surprised. . . ." She giggled like a soubrette. The giggle was quite out of character at the moment, but she had not been able to resist it. Besides (she was sure) it was these quick darts and turns, these flashing inconsistencies that gave her the peculiar, sweet-sour, highly volatile charm that was her *spécialité de la maison*.

"Surprised when you picked up with somebody else?" asked the man.

She nodded.

"What happened to that?"

"After I got divorced, I didn't want to marry him any more."

"So now you're on your own?"

The question seemed almost idle, but she replied in a distinct, emphatic voice, as if he were deaf and she had an important message for him.

"No," she said. "I'm going to be married in the fall."

"Are you in love with this one?"

"Oh yes," she said. "He's charming. And he and I are much more alike than Tom and I were. He's a little bit of a bum and I am too. And he's selfish, which is a good thing for me. Tom was so *good*. And so vulnerable. The back of his neck was just like a little boy's. I always remember the back of his neck."

She spoke earnestly, but she saw that the man did not understand. Nobody had ever understood—and she herself did not quite know—why this image retained such power over her, why all her feelings of guilt and shame had clustered around the picture of a boyish neck (the face had not been boyish, but prematurely lined) bared like an early martyr's for the sword. "How could I have done it?" she whispered to herself again, as she still did nearly every day, and once again she was suffused with horror.

"He was too good for me," she said at last "I felt like his mother. Nobody would ever have known it, but he needed to be protected"

That was it That was what was so awful Nobody would ever have known. But she had crawled into his secret life and nestled there, like the worm in the rose How warm and succulent it had been! And when she had devoured it all, she had gone away. "Oh God," she muttered under her breath. It was no excuse that she had loved him The worm indubitably loves the rose

Hurriedly, to distract herself, she began to talk about her love affairs. First names, with thumbnail descriptions, rolled out till her whole life sounded to her like a drugstore novel And she found herself over-anxious to explain to him why in each case the thing had not borne fruit, how natural it was that she should have broken with John, how reasonable that she should never have forgiven Ernest It was as if she had been a prosecuting attorney drawing up a brief against each of her lovers, and, not liking the position, she was relieved when the man interrupted her

"Seems to me," he said, "you're still in love with that husband of yours"

"Do you think so really?" she asked, leaning forward "Why?" Perhaps at last she had found him, the one she kept looking for, the one who could tell her what she was really like. For this she had gone to palmists and graphologists, hoping not for a dark man or a boat trip, but for some quick blaze of gypsy insight that would show her her own lineaments. If she once knew, she had no doubt that she could behave perfectly, it was merely a question of finding out How, she thought, can you act upon your feelings if you don't know what they are? As a little girl whispering to a young priest in the confessional she had sometimes felt sure The Church could classify it all for you. If you talked or laughed in church, told lies, had impure thoughts, or conversations, you were bad, if you obeyed your parents or guardians, went to confession and communion regularly, said prayers for the dead, you were good. Protestants, like her father, were neutral, they lived in a gray world beyond good and evil But when as a homely high-school girl, she had rejected the Church's filing system, together with her aunt's illiterate morality, she had given away her sense of herself For a while she had believed that it was a matter of waiting until you grew older and your character was formed, then you would be able to recognize it as easily as a photograph. But she was now twenty-four, and had heard other people say she had a strong personality, she herself however was still in the dark This hearty stranger in the green shirt—perhaps he could really tell whether she was in love with her husband. It was like the puzzle about the men with marks on their foreheads A couldn't know whether his own forehead was marked, but B and

C knew, of course, and he could, if he were bright, deduce it from their behavior.

"Well," replied the man, "of all the fellows you've talked about, Tom's the only one I get a picture of. Except your father—but that's different, he's the kind of a man I know about."

The answer disappointed her. It was too plain and folksy to cover the facts. It was true that she had loved her husband *personally*, for himself, and this had never happened to her with anyone else. Nobody else's idiosyncrasies had ever warmed her; nobody else had she ever watched asleep. Yet that kind of love had, unfortunately, rendered her impotent to love him in the ordinary way, had, in fact, made it necessary for her to be unfaithful to him, and so, in the course of time, to leave him altogether. Or could it not be put in another way? Could she not say that all that conjugal tenderness had been a brightly packaged substitute for the Real Thing, for the long carnal swoon she had never quite been able to execute in the marriage bed? She had noticed that in those households where domesticity burns brightest and the Little Attentions rain most prodigally, the husband is seldom admitted to his real conjugal rights.

But it was impossible to explain this to the man. Already the conversation had dropped once or twice into ribaldry, but she was determined to preserve the decorum of the occasion. It was dark outside now and the waiter was back again, serving little brook trout on plates that had the Union Pacific's crest on them. Yet even as she warned herself how impossible it was, she heard her voice rushing on in a torrent of explicitness. (This had all happened so many times before, ever since, as a schoolgirl, she had exchanged dirty jokes with the college boys from Eugene and seen them stop the car and lunge at her across the gearshift. While all the time, she commiserated with herself, she had merely been trying to be a good fellow, to show that she was sophisticated and grown-up, and not to let them suspect (oh, never!) that her father did not allow her to go out with boys and that she was a neophyte, a helpless fledgling, with no small talk and no coquetry at all. It had not been *fair* (she could still italicize it, bitterly) for them to tackle her like a football dummy; she remembered the struggles back and forth on the slippery leather seats of sports roadsters, the physical awkwardness of it all being somehow the crowning indignity, she remembered also the rides home afterwards, and how the boy's face would always be sullen and closed—he was thinking that he had been cheated, made a fool of, and resolving never to ask her again, so that she would finally become notorious for being taken out only once. How indecent and anti-human it had been, like the tussle between the drowning man and the lifeguard! And of course she had invited it, just as she was inviting it now, but what she was really asking all along was not that the male should

assault her, but that he should believe her a woman. This freedom of speech of hers was a kind of masquerade of sexuality, like the rubber breasts that homosexuals put on for drags, but, like the dummy breasts, its brazenness betrayed it—it was a poor copy and a hostile travesty all at once. But the men, she thought, did not look into it so deeply, they could only respond by leaping at her—which, after all, she supposed, was their readiest method of showing her that her impersonation had been convincing. Yet that response, when it came, never failed to disconcert and frighten her. I had not counted on this, she could always whisper to herself, with a certain sad bewilderment. For it was all wrong, it was unnatural: art is to be admired, not acted on, and the public does not belong on the stage, nor the actors in the audience.)

But once more the man across the table spared her. His face was a little heavy with drink, but she could see no lechery in it, and he listened to her as calmly as a priest. The sense of the nightmare lifted, free will was restored to her.

"You know what my favorite quotation is?" she asked suddenly. She must be getting drunk, she knew, or she would not have said this, and a certain cool part of her personality protested. I must not quote poetry, she thought, I must stop it, God help us, if I'm not careful, we'll be singing Yale songs next. But her voice had broken away from her, she could only follow it, satirically, from a great distance. "It's from Chaucer," she went on, when she saw that she had his attention. "Criseyde says it, 'I am myn owene woman, wel at ese.'"

The man had some difficulty in understanding the Middle English, but when at last he had got it straight, he looked at her with bald admiration.

"Golly," he said, "you are, at that!"

The train woke her the next morning as it jerked into a Wyoming station. "Evanston?" she wondered. It was still dark. The Pullman shade was drawn, and she imagined at first that she was in her own lower berth. She knew that she had been drunk the night before, but reflected with satisfaction that Nothing Had Happened. It would have been terrible if . . . She moved slightly and touched the man's body.

She did not scream, but only jerked away in a single spasmodic movement of rejection. This can't be, she thought angrily, it can't be. She shut her eyes tight. When I open them again, she said, he will be gone. I can't face it, she thought, holding herself rigid, the best thing to do is to go back to sleep. For a few minutes she actually dozed and dreamed she was back in Lower Seven with the sheets feeling extraordinary crisp and clean and the curtains hanging protectively about her. But in the dream her pillow shook under her as the



porter poked it to call her for breakfast, and she woke again and knew that the man was still beside her and had moved in his sleep. The train was pulling out of the station. If it had not been so early, outside on the platform there would have been tall men in cowboy hats. Maybe, she thought, I passed out and he put me to bed. But the body next to her was naked, and horror rippled over her again as she realized by the coarseness of the sheets touching her that she was naked too. Oh my God, she said, get me out of this and I will do anything you want.

Waves of shame began to run through her, like savage internal blushes, as fragments of the night before presented themselves for inspection. They had sung songs, all right, she remembered, and there had been some question of disturbing the other passengers, and so the door had been shut. After that the man had come around to her side of the table and kissed her rather greedily. She had fought him off for a long time, but at length her will had softened. She had felt tired and kind, and thought, why not? Then there had been something peculiar about the love-making itself—but she could not recall what it was. She had tried to keep aloof from it, to be present in body but not in spirit. Somehow that had not worked out and she had been dragged in and humiliated. There was some comfort in this vagueness, but recollection quickly stabbed her again. There were (oh, holy Virgin!) four-letter words that she had been forced to repeat, and, at the climax, a rain of blows on her buttocks that must surely (dear God!) have left bruises. She must be careful not to let her aunt see her without any clothes on, she told herself, and remembered how once she had visualized sins as black marks on the white soul. This sin, at least, no one would see. But all at once she became aware of the significance of the sheets. The bed had been made up. And that meant that the Pullman porter. . . . She closed her eyes, exhausted, unable to finish the thought. The Vincent Sheean man, the New Deal lady, the waiter, the porter seemed to press in on her, a crowd of jeering material witnesses. If only nobody could know. . . .

But perhaps it was not too late. She had a sudden vision of herself in a black dress, her face scrubbed and powdered, her hair neatly combed, sitting standoffishly in her seat, watching Utah and Nevada go by and reading her publisher's copy of a new *avant-garde* novel. It *could* be done. If she could get back before the first call for breakfast, she might be able to carry it off. There would be the porter, of course, but he would not dare gossip to passengers. Softly, she climbed out of the berth and began to look for her clothes. In the darkness, she discovered her slip and dress neatly hung by the wash basin—the man must have put them there, and it was fortunate, at least, that he was such a shipshape character, for the dress would not be rumpled. On the floor she collected her stockings and a pair of

white crepe-de-chine pants, many times mended, with a button off and a little brass pin in its place. Feeling herself blush for the pin, she sat down on the floor and pulled her stockings on. One garter was missing. She put on the rest of her clothes, and then began to look for the garter, but though she groped her way over every inch of the compartment, she could not find it. She sank to the floor again with one stocking hanging loosely down, buried her head in her arms and cried. She saw herself locked in an intolerable but ludicrous dilemma: it was impossible to face the rest of the train with one stocking hanging down, but it was also impossible to wait for the man to wake up and enlist him in retrieving the garter; it was impossible to send the porter for it later in the morning, and more impossible to call for it in person. But as the comic nature of the problem grew plain to her, her head cleared. With a final sob she stripped off her stockings and stuffed them into her purse. She stepped barefooted into her shoes, and was fumbling in her purse for a comb when the man turned over and groaned.

He remembers, she thought in terror, as she saw his arm reach out dimly white and plump in the darkness. She stood very still, waiting. Perhaps he would go back to sleep. But there was a click, and the reading light above the berth went on. The man looked at her in bewilderment. She realized that she had forgotten to buckle her belt.

"Dearest," he said, "what in the world are you doing?"

"I'm dressed," she said. "I've got to get out before they wake up. Good-by."

She bent over with the intention of kissing him on the forehead. Politeness required something, but this was the most she could bring herself to do. The man seized her arms and pulled her down, sitting up himself beside her. He looked very fat and the short hair on his chest was gray.

"You can't go," he said, quite simply and naturally, but as if he had been thinking about it all night long. "I love you. I'm crazy about you. This is the most wonderful thing that's ever happened to me. You come to San Francisco with me and we'll go to Monterey, and I'll fix it up with Leonie to get a divorce."

She stared at him incredulously, but there was no doubt of it: he was serious. His body was trembling. Her heart sank as she saw that there was no longer any question of her leaving, common decency forbade it. Yet she was more frightened than flattered by his declaration of love. It was as if some terrible natural force were loose in the compartment. His seriousness, moreover, was a rebuke; her own squeamishness and sick distaste, which a moment before had seemed virtuous in her, now appeared heartless, even frivolous, in the face of his emotion.

"But I'm engaged," she said, rather thinly.

"You're not in love with him," he said. "You couldn't have done what you did last night if you were." As the memory of love-making returned to him, his voice grew embarrassingly hoarse.

"I was tight," she said flatly in a low voice.

"A girl like you doesn't let a man have her just because she's drunk."

She bowed her head. There was no possible answer she could give. "I must go," she repeated. In a way she knew that she would have to stay, and knew, too, that it was only a matter of hours, but, just as a convict whose sentence is nearly up will try a jail break and get shot down by the guards, so the girl, with Sacramento not far ahead, could not restrain herself from begging, like a claustrophobic, for immediate release. She saw that the man was getting hurt and angry, but still she held herself stiffly in his embrace and would not look at him. He turned her head round with his hand "Kiss me," he said, but she pulled away.

"I have to throw up"

He pointed to the toilet seat, which was covered with green upholstery. (She had forgotten that Pullman compartments had this indecent feature) She raised the cover and vomited, while the man sat on the bed and watched her. This was the nadir, she thought bitterly, surely nothing worse than this could ever happen to her. She wiped the tears from her eyes and leaned against the wall. The man made a gesture toward her.

"Don't touch me," she said, "or I'll be sick again. It would be better if I went back to my berth."

"Poor little girl," he said tenderly. "You feel bad, don't you?"

He got out of the berth and took a fresh bottle of whisky from a suitcase.

"I'll have to save the Bourbon for the conductor," he said in a matter-of-fact, friendly voice. "He'll be around later on, looking for his cut."

For the first time that morning the girl laughed. The man poured out two small drinks and handed her one of them. "Take it like medicine," he advised.

She sat down on the berth and crossed her legs. The man put on a dressing-gown and pulled up a chair opposite her. They raised their glasses. The smell of the whisky gagged her and she knew that it was out of the question, physically, for her to get drunk a second time. Yet she felt her spirits lift a little. There was an air of professional rowdiness about their drinking neat whisky early in the morning in a disheveled compartment, that took her fancy.

"What about the porter?"

"Oh," said the man genially. "I've squared him. I gave him ten

last night and I'll give him another ten when I get off. He thinks you're wonderful. He said to me, 'Mr. Breen, you sure done better than most'."

"Oh!" said the girl, covering her face with her hands. "Oh! Oh!" For a moment she felt that she could not bear it, but as she heard the man laugh she made her own discomfiture comic and gave an extra groan or two that were purely theatrical. She raised her head and looked at him shamefaced, and then giggled. This vulgarity was more comforting to her than any assurances of love. If the seduction (or whatever it was) could be reduced to its lowest common denominator, could be seen in farcical terms, she could accept and even, wryly, enjoy it. The world of farce was a sort of moral underworld, a cheerful, well-lit hell where a Fall was only a prat-fall after all.

Moreover, this talk had about it the atmosphere of the locker room or the stag line, an atmosphere more bracing, more astringent than the air of Bohemia. The ten-dollar tips, the Bourbon for the conductor indicated competence and connoisseurship, which, while not of the highest order, did extend from food and drink and haberdashery all the way up to women. That was what had been missing in the men she had known in New York—the shrewd buyer's eye, the swift, brutal appraisal. That was what you found in the country clubs and beach clubs and yacht clubs—but you never found it in the café of the Brevoort. The men she had known during these last four years had been, when you faced it, too easily pleased: her success had been gratifying but hollow. It was not difficult, after all, to be the prettiest girl at a party for the sharecroppers. At bottom, she was contemptuous of the men who had believed her perfect, for she knew that in a bathing suit at Southampton she would never have passed muster, and though she had never submitted herself to this cruel test, it lived in her mind as a threat to her. A copy of *Vogue* picked up at the beauty parlor, a lunch at a restaurant that was beyond her means, would suffice to remind her of her peril. And if she had felt safe with the different men who had been in love with her it was because—she saw it now—in one way or another they were all of them lame ducks. The handsome ones, like her fiancé, were good-for-nothing, the reliable ones, like her husband, were peculiar-looking, the well-to-do ones were short and wore lifts in their shoes or fat with glasses, the clever ones were alcoholic or slightly homosexual, the serious ones were foreigners or else wore beards or black shirts or were desperately poor and had no table manners. Somehow each of them was handicapped for American life and therefore humble in love. And was she too disqualified, did she really belong to this fraternity of cripples, or was she not a sound and normal woman who had been spending her life in self-imposed exile, a princess among the trolls?

She did not know. She would have found out soon enough had

she stayed on in Portland, but she had not risked it. She had gone away East to college and never come back until now. And very early in her college life she had got engaged to a painter, so that nothing that happened in the way of cutting in at the dances at Yale and Princeton really "counted." She had put herself out of the running and was patently not trying. Her engagement had been a form of insurance, but the trouble was that it not only insured her against failure but also against success. Should she have been more courageous? She could not tell, even now. Perhaps she *was* a princess because her father was a real gentleman who lunched at his club and traveled by drawing room or compartment; but on the other hand, there was her aunt. She could not find out for herself; it would take a prince to tell her. This man now—surely he came from that heavenly world, that divine position at the center of things where choice is unlimited. And he had chosen *her*.

But that was all wrong. She had only to look at him to see that she had cheated again, had tried to get into the game with a deck of phony cards. For this man also was out of the running. He was too old. Sound as he was in every other respect, time had made a lame duck of him. If she had met him ten years before, would he have chosen her then?

He took the glass from her hands and put his arms around her. "My God," he said, "if this had only happened ten years ago!"

She held herself stony in his embrace, and felt indeed like a rock being lapped by some importunate wave. There was a touch of dignity in the smile, she thought, but what takes place in the end?—Erosion. At that the image suddenly turned and presented another facet to her. dear Jesus, she told herself, frightened, I'm really as hard as nails. Then all at once she was hugging the man with an air of warmth that was not quite spurious and not quite sincere (for the distaste could not be smothered but only ignored); she pressed her ten fingers into his back and for the first time kissed him carefully on the mouth.

The glow of self-sacrifice illuminated her. This, she thought decidedly, is going to be the only real act of charity I have ever performed in my life, it will be the only time I have ever given anything when it honestly hurt me to do so. That her asceticism should have to be expressed in terms of sensuality deepened, in a curious way, its value, for the sacrifice was both paradoxical and positive; this was no simple abstention like a meatless Friday or a chaste Sunday: it was the mortification of the flesh achieved through the performance of the act of pleasure.

Quickly she helped him take off the black dress, and stretched herself out on the berth like a slab of white lamb on an altar. While she waited with some impatience for the man to exhaust himself,

for the indignity to be over, she contemplated with a burning nostalgia the image of herself, fully dressed, with the novel, in her Pullman seat, and knew, with the firmest conviction, that for once she was really and truly good, not hard or heartless at all.

"You need a bath," said the man abruptly, raising himself on one elbow and looking sharply down at her as she lay relaxed on the rumpled sheet. The curtain was halfway up, and outside the Great Salt Lake surrounded them. They had been going over it for hours, that immense, gray-brown blighting Dead Sea, which looked, not like an actual lake, but like a mirage seen in the desert. She had watched it for a long time, while the man beside her murmured of his happiness and his plans for their future; they had slept a little and when they opened their eyes again, it was still there, an interminable reminder of sterility, polygamy, and waste.

"Get up," he went on, "and I'll ring for the porter to fix it for you."

He spoke harshly. This was the drill sergeant, the voice of authority. She sprang to attention, her lips quivering. Her nakedness, her long, loose hair, which a moment before had seemed voluptuous to her, now all at once became bold and disorderly, like an unbuttoned tunic at an army inspection. This was the first wound he had dealt her, but how deep the sword went in!—back to the teachers who could smoke cigarettes and gossip with you in the late afternoon and then rebuke you in the morning class, back to the relations who would talk with you as an equal and then tell your aunt you were too young for silk stockings, back through all the betrayers, the friendly enemies, the Janus-faced overseers, back to the mother who could love you and then die.

"I don't want a bath," she asserted stubbornly. "I'm perfectly clean." But she knew, of course, that she had not bathed since she left New York, and, if she had been allowed to go her own way, would not have bathed until she reached Portland—who would think of paying a dollar for a bath on the train? In the ladies' room, where soot and spilt powder made a film over the dressing tables and the hair receivers stared up, archaic as cuspidors, one sponged oneself hastily under one's wrapper, and, looking at one's neighbors jockeying for position at the mirror, with their dirty kimonos, their elaborate make-up kits, and their uncombed permanents, one felt that one had been fastidious enough, and hurried away, out of the sweet, musty, unused smell of middle-aged women dressing. "I'm perfectly clean," she repeated. The man merely pressed the bell, and when the porter announced that the bath was ready, shoved her out into the corridor in his Brooks Brothers dressing-gown with a cake of English toilet soap in her hands.

In the ladies' lounge, the colored maid had run the bath and stood just behind the half-drawn curtain, waiting to hand her soap and towels. And though, ordinarily, the girl had no particular physical modesty, at this moment it seemed to her insupportable that anyone should watch her bathe. There was something terrible and familiar about the scene—herself in the tub, washing, and a woman standing tall above her—something terrible and familiar indeed about the whole episode of being forced to cleanse herself. Slowly she remembered. The maid was, of course, her aunt, standing over her tub on Saturday nights to see that she washed every bit of herself, standing over her at the medicine cabinet to see that she took the castor oil, standing over her bed in the mornings to see if the sheets were wet. Not since she had been grown-up had she felt this peculiar weakness and shame. It seemed to her that she did not have the courage to send the maid away, that the maid was somehow the man's representative, his spy, whom it would be impious to resist. Tears of futile, self-pitying rage came into her eyes, and she told herself that she would stay in the bath all day, rather than go back to the compartment. But the bell rang in the dressing-room, and the maid rustled the curtain, saying, "Do you want anything more? I'll leave the towels here," and the door swung to behind her, leaving the girl alone.

She lay in the bath a long time, gathering her forces. In the tepid water, she felt for the first time a genuine socialist ardor. For the first time in her life, she truly hated luxury, hated Brooks Brothers and Bergdorf Goodman and Chanel and furs and good food. All the pretty things she had seen in shops and coveted appeared to her suddenly gross, superfatted, fleshly, even, strangely, unclean. By a queer reversal, the very safety pin in her underwear, which she had blushed for earlier in the morning, came to look to her now like a symbol of moral fastidiousness, just as the sores of a mendicant saint can, if thought of in the right way, testify to his spiritual health. A proud, bitter smile formed on her lips, as she saw herself as a citadel of socialist virginity, that could be taken and taken again, but never truly subdued. The man's whole assault on her now seemed to have had a political character; it was an incidental atrocity in the long class war. She smiled again, thinking that she had come out of it untouched, while he had been reduced to a jelly.

All morning in the compartment he had been in a state of wild and happy excitement, full of projects for reform and renewal. He was not sure what ought to happen next, he only knew that everything must be different. In one breath, he would have the two of them playing golf together at Del Monte; in the next, he would imagine that he had given her up and was starting in again with Leonie on a new basis. Then he would see himself throwing everything overboard and going to live in sin in a villa in a little French

town. But at that moment a wonderful technical innovation for the manufacture of steel would occur to him, and he would be anxious to get back to the office to put it through. He talked of giving his fortune to a pacifist organization in Washington, and five minutes later made up his mind to send little Frank, who showed signs of being a problem child, to a damn good military school. Perhaps he would enlarge his Gates Mills house; perhaps he would sell it and move to New York. He would take her to the theater and the best restaurants; they would go to museums and ride on bus tops. He would become a CIO organizer, or else he would give her a job in the personnel department of the steel company, and she could live in Cleveland with him and Leonie. But no, he would not do that, he would marry her, as he had said in the first place, or, if she would not marry him, he would keep her in an apartment in New York. Whatever happened she must not get off the train. He had come to regard her as a sort of rabbit's foot that he must keep by him at any price.

Naturally, she told herself, the idea was absurd. Yet suddenly her heart seemed to contract and the mood of indulgent pity ebbed away from her. She shivered and pulled herself out of the tub. His obstinacy on this point frightened her. If he should bar her way when the time came . . . ? If there should be a struggle . . . ? If she should have to pull the communication cord . . . ? She told herself that such things do not happen, that during the course of the day she would surely be able to convince him that she must go. (She had noticed that the invocation of her father inevitably moved him. "We mustn't do anything to upset your father," he would say. "He must be a very fine man." And tears would actually come to his eyes. She would play that, she thought, for all it was worth.) Yet her uneasiness did not abate. It was as if, carelessly, inadvertently, almost, she had pulled a switch that had set a whole strange factory going, and now, too late, she discovered that she did not know how to turn it off. She could have run away, but some sense of guilt, of social responsibility, of primitive awe, kept her glued to the spot, watching and listening, waiting to be ground to bits. Once, in a beauty parlor, she had been put under a defective dryer that remained on high no matter where she turned the regulator; her neck seemed to be burning up, and she could, at any time, have freed herself by simply getting out of the chair; yet she had stayed there the full half-hour, until the operator came to release her. "I think," she had said then, lightly, "there is something wrong with the machine." And when the operator had examined it, all the women had gathered round, clucking, "How did you ever stand it?" She had merely shrugged her shoulders. It had seemed, at the time, better to suffer than to "make a fuss." Perhaps it was something like this that had held her to the man today, the



fear of a scene and a kind of morbid competitiveness that would not allow the man to outdistance her in feeling. Yet suddenly she knew that it did not matter what her motives were: she could not, *could not*, get off the train until the man was reconciled to her doing so, until this absurd, ugly love story should somehow be concluded.

If only she could convert him to something, if she could say, "Give up your business, go to Paris, become a Catholic, join the CIO, join the army, join the Socialist Party, go off to the war in Spain." For a moment the notion engaged her. It would be wonderful, she thought, to be able to relate afterwards that she had sent a middle-aged businessman to die for the Republicans at the Alcazar. But almost at once she recognized that this was too much to hope for. The man back in the compartment was not equal to it; he was equal to a divorce, to a change of residence, at most to a change of business, but not to a change of heart. She sighed slightly, facing the truth about him. His gray flannel dressing gown lay on a chair beside her. Very slowly, she wrapped herself in it; the touch of the material made gooseflesh rise. Something about this garment—the color, perhaps, or the unsuitable size—reminded her of the bathing suits one rents at a public swimming pool. She gritted her teeth and pulled open the door. She did not pause to look about but plunged down the corridor with lowered head, though she passed no one, it seemed to her that she was running the gantlet. The compartment, with its naked man and disordered bed, beckoned her on now, like a home.

When she opened the door, she found the man dressed, the compartment made up, and a white cloth spread on the collapsible table between the seats. In a few minutes the waiter of the night before was back with orange juice in cracked ice and corned beef hash and fish cakes. It was as if the scenery, which had been struck the night before, had been set up again for the matinee. The difference was that the door remained shut. Nevertheless, though there were no onlookers, atmospheric conditions in the compartment had changed, the relationship of the pair took on a certain sociable formality. The little breakfast passed off like a ceremonial feast. All primitive peoples, she thought, had known that a cataclysmic experience, whether joyful or sad, had in the end to be liquidated in an orderly meal. The banquets in Homer came to her mind, the refreshments the Irish put out at a wake, the sweatmeats the Arabs nibble after love, the fairy stories that end *And-the-king-ordered-a-great-dinner-to-be-served-to-all-his-people*. Upheavals of private feeling, like the one she had just been through, were as incalculable and anti-social as death. With a graceful inclination of her head, she accepted a second fish cake from the waiter, and felt herself restored to the human race.

There was to be no more love-making, she saw, and from the moment she felt sure of this, she began to be a little bit in love. The

long day passed as if in slow motion, in desultory, lingering, tender talk. Dreamy confidences were murmured, and trailed off, casual and unemphatic, like the dialogue in a play by Chekhov. The great desert lake out the window disappeared and was replaced by the sagebrush country, which seemed to her a pleasant, melancholy symbol of the contemporary waste land. The man's life lay before her, it was almost as if she could reach out and touch it, poke it, explore it, shine it up, and give it back to him. The people in it grew distinct to her, though they swam in a poetic ambience. She could see Eleanor, now an executive in her forties, good-looking, well-turned-out, the kind of woman that eats at Longchamps or the Algonquin, and then Leonie, finer-drawn, younger, with a certain Marie Laurencin look that pale, pretty, neutral-colored rich women get; then herself, still younger, still more highly organized—and all the time the man, a ludicrous and touching Ponce de Leon, growing helplessly older and coarser in inverse relation to the women he needed and wanted.

And she could see the Brussels carpet in a Philadelphia whorehouse, where he had first had a woman, the old Marmon roadster in which he and Eleanor had made love, and the couch in her father's house where the old man had surprised them, and also the squash court at the club, the aquamarine bathtubs in his house, the barbecue pit, the fraternity brothers, the Audubon prints in his study, the vacuum bottle on the night table. Somehow it had become essential to them both that she should know *everything*. They might have been collaborators, drawing up a dossier for a new *Babbitt*. This is what I am, he was saying: the wallpaper in the larger guest room is a blue and white colonial design; I go to bed at ten and Leonie sits up and reads; I like kippers for breakfast; we have Hepplewhite chairs in the sitting room; the doctor is worried about my kidneys, and I feel lonely when I first wake up.

There were the details, the realistic "touches," and then there was the great skeleton of the story itself. In 1917 he was a chemistry major, just out of the state university, with a job for the next year teaching science at a high school, and plans, then, for a master's degree, and perhaps a job in the department at Cornell, where he had an uncle in the Agricultural School. The father had been a small businessman in a Pennsylvania coal town, the grandfather a farmer, the mother a little lady from Tennessee. But then there came the Officers' Training Camp, and the brilliant war record, and the right connections, so that the high-school job was never taken, and instead he was playing handball at the Athletic Club in the evenings and working as a metallurgist for the steel company during the day. Soon he was moved into production, but somehow he was too amiable and easygoing for this, and in the days when he thought he was going to marry Eleanor, he was glad to get out and go into the coal

business. When he came back to the steel company, it was as a purchasing agent, and here his shrewdness and *bonhomie* were better employed. He became Chief Purchasing Agent and Fourth Vice-President, it was doubtful whether he would ever go further

For ten years, he confided, he had been visited now and then by a queer sense of having missed the boat, but it was all vague with him: he had no idea of when the boat had sailed or what kind of boat it was or where it went to. If he had married Eleanor? But she was not the type, after eight years they had both seen that and were still good friends. Would he have done better to take the teaching job? It hardly seemed so. Plainly, he was no scientist—the steel company had seen this at once—and, had he taken that other road, at best he would have finished as the principal of a high school or the head of the chemistry department in a small-time state university. No, she thought, he was not a scientist *manqué*, but simply a nice man, and it was a pity that society had offered him no nicer way of being nice than the job of buying materials for a company in Little Steel. The job, she saw, was one of the least compromising jobs he could have held and still made money; by regarding his business life as a nexus of personal friendships he had tried to hold himself aloof from both the banks and the blast furnaces. He was full of fraternal feelings, loyalties, even, toward the tin salesmen and iron magnates and copper executives and their wives who wined him and dined him and took him to the latest musical shows over and over again. (“Don’t mistake me,” he said, “most of those fellows and their women are mighty fine people”) Still—there was always the contract, waiting to be signed the next morning, lying implacably on the desk

Here he was, affable, a good mixer, self-evidently a sound guy, and yet these qualities were somehow impeached by the commercial use that was made of them, so that he found himself, as he grew older, hunting, more and more anxiously, for new and non-commercial contexts in which to assert his gregariousness. He refused the conventional social life of Cleveland. At the country club dances, he was generally to be found in the bar, shooting dice with the bartender; he played a little stud poker, but no bridge. In New York, he would stay at the Biltmore or the Murray Hill, buy his clothes at Brooks Brothers, and eat—when Leonie was not with him—at Cavanagh’s, Luchow’s, or the Lafayette. But the greater part of his time he spent on trains, talking to his fellow-passengers, getting their life stories (“Golly,” he interjected, “if I were a writer like you!”) This was one of his greatest pleasures, he said, and he would never go by plane if he could help it. In the three and a half days that it took a train to cross the continent, you could meet somebody who was a little bit different, and have a good long visit with them. Sometimes, also, he would stop over and look up old friends, but lately that had been

disappointing—so many of them were old or on the wagon, suffering from ulcers or cirrhosis of the liver. . . .

He spread his hands suddenly. There it was, he indicated; he was sharing it all with her, like a basket lunch. And, as she accepted it, nodding from time to time in pleasure and recognition, supplementing it occasionally from her own store, she knew that the actual sharing of his life was no longer so much in question. During this afternoon of confidences, he had undergone a catharsis. He was at rest now, and happy, and she was free. He would never be alone again, she thought, in fact, it was as if he had never been alone at all, for by a tremendous act of perception, she had thrust herself back into his past, and was settled there forever, like the dear companion, the twin, we pray for as children, while our parents, listening, laugh. She had brought it off, and now she was almost reluctant to leave him. A pang of joy went through her as she examined her own sorrow and found it to be real. All day she believed she had been acting a tragic part in something called *One Perfect Night*, but slowly, without her being aware of it, the counterfeit had passed into the true. She did not understand exactly how it had happened. Perhaps it was because she had come so very, very close—*tout comprendre, c'est tout aimer*—and perhaps it was because she was good at the task he had assigned her. At the sight of his life, waiting to be understood, she had rolled up her sleeves with all the vigor of a first-class cook confronting a brand new kitchen.

"I love you, she said suddenly. "I didn't before, but now I do."

The man glanced sharply at her.

"Then you won't get off the train . . . ?"

"Oh, yes," she said, for now at last she could be truthful with him. "I'll certainly get off. One reason I love you, I suppose, is because I *am* getting off."

His dark eyes met hers in perfect comprehension.

"And one reason I'm going to let you do it," he said, "is because you love me."

She lowered her eyes, astonished, once more, at his shrewdness.

"Hell," he said, "it's a funny thing, but I'm so happy now that I don't care whether I ever see you again. I probably won't feel that way after you're gone. Right now I think I can live on this one day for the rest of my life."

"I hope you can," she said, her voice trembling with sincerity. "My dear, dear Mr. Breen, I hope you can." Then they both began to laugh wildly because she could not call him by his first name.

Still, he had not quite relinquished the idea of marrying her, and, once, very late in the afternoon, he struck out at her with unexpected, clumsy ferocity.

"You need a man to take care of you," he exclaimed. "I hate to

see you go back to that life you've been living in New York. Your father ought to make you stay home in Portland. In a few years, you'll be one of those Bohemian horrors with oily hair and long earrings. It makes me sick to think about it."

She pressed her lips together, and was amazed to find how hurt she was. It was unthinkable that he should speak of her way of life with such contempt, it was as if he had made a point of telling her that her gayest, wickedest, most extravagant hat was ugly and out of fashion.

"But you fell in love with me because I *am* Bohemian," she said, forcing herself to smile, to take a wise and reasonable tone.

"No," he said, in a truculently sentimental voice. "It's because underneath all that you're just a sweet girl."

She shook her head impatiently. It was not true, of course, but it was hopeless to argue with him about it. Clearly, he took some cruel satisfaction in telling her that she was different from what she was. That implied that he had not fallen in love with her at all, but with some other person: the whole extraordinary little idyll had been based on a misunderstanding. Poor Marianna, she thought, poor pickings, to be loved under cover of darkness in Isabella's name! She did not speak for a long time.

Night fell again, and the little dinner that was presently served lacked the glamour of the earlier meals. The Union Pacific's menu had been winnowed out; they were reduced to steak and Great Big Baked Potatoes. She wished that they were out in the diner, in full view, eating some unusual dish and drinking a bottle of white wine. Even here in the compartment, she had hoped that he would offer her wine; the waiter suggested it, but the man shook his head without consulting her; his excesses in drink and love were beginning to tell on him; he looked tired and sick.

But by ten o'clock, when they were well out of Reno, she had warmed to him again. He had been begging her to let him send her a present, the notion displeased her at first; she felt a certain arrogant condescension in it; she refused to permit it, refused, even, to give him her address. Then he looked at her suddenly, with all the old humility and square self-knowledge in his brown eyes.

"Look," he said, "you'll be doing me a kindness. You see, that's the only thing a man like me can do for a woman is buy her things and love her a hell of a lot at night. I'm different from your literary boy friends and your artistic boy friends. I can't write you a poem or paint your picture. The only way I can show that I love you is to spend money on you."

"Money's your medium," she said, smiling, happy in this further insight he had given her, happy in her own gift of concise expression.

He nodded and she gave her consent. It must, however, be a

very *small* present, and it must not, on any account, be jewelry, she said, not knowing precisely why she imposed this latter condition

As they moved into the last hour of the trip, the occasion took on an elegiac solemnity. They talked very little, the man held both of her hands tightly. Toward the end, he broke the silence to say, "I want you to know that this has been the happiest day of my life." As she heard these words, a drowsy, sensuous contentment invaded her, it was as if she had been waiting for them all along; this was the climax, the spiritual orgasm. And it was just as she had known from the very first in the end, he had not let her down. She had not been wrong in him after all.

They stood on the platform as the train came into Sacramento. It was after three in the morning. Her luggage was piled up around them, one suitcase had a missing handle and was tied up with a rope. The man made a noise of disapproval.

"Your father," he said, "is going to feel terrible when he sees *that*."

The girl laughed, the train slowed down; the man kissed her passionately several times, ignoring the porter who waited beside them with a large, Hollywood-darky smile on his face.

"If I were ten years younger," the man said, in a curious, measured tone, as if he were taking an oath, "I'd never let you get off this train." It sounded, she thought, like an apology to God.

In the station the air was hot and thick. She sat down to wait, and immediately she was damp and grubby, her stockings were wrinkled; her black suede shoes had somehow got dusty, and, she noticed for the first time, one of the heels was run over. Her trip home seemed peculiarly pointless, for she had known for the last twelve hours that she was never going to marry the young man back in New York.

On the return trip, her train stopped in Cleveland early in the morning. In a new fall suit she sat in the club car, waiting. Mr. Breen hurried into the car. He was wearing a dark-blue business suit and had two packages in his hand. One of them was plainly a florist's box. She took it from him and opened it, disclosing two of the largest and most garish purple orchids she had ever seen. He helped her pin them on her shoulder and did not appear to notice how oddly they harmonized with her burnt-siena jacket. The other box contained a bottle of whisky, *in memoriam*, he said.

They had the club car to themselves, and for the fifteen minutes the train waited in the station he looked at her and talked. It seemed to her that he had been talking ever since she left him, talking volubly, desperately, incoherently, over the long-distance telephone, via air mail, by Western Union and Postal Telegraph. She had received from

him several pieces of glamour-girl underwear and a topaz brooch, and had been disappointed and a little humiliated by the taste displayed. She was glad now that the train stopped at such an outlandish hour, for she felt that he cut a ridiculous figure, with his gifts in his hand, like a superannuated stage-door Johnny.

She herself had little to say, and sat passive, letting the torrent of talk and endearment splash over her. Sooner or later, she knew, the law of diminishing returns would begin to operate, and she would cease to reap these overwhelming profits from the small investment of herself she had made. At the moment, he was begging her to marry him, describing a business conference he was about to attend, and asking her approval of a vacation trip he was planning to take with his wife. Of these three elements in his conversation, the first was predominant, but she sensed that already she was changing for him, becoming less of a mistress and more of a confidante. It was significant that he was not (as she had feared) hoping to ride all the way to New York with her: the business conference, he explained, prevented that.

It never failed, she thought, to be a tiny blow to guess that a man is losing interest in you, and she was tempted, as on such occasions she always had been, to make some gesture that would quicken it again. If she let him think she would sleep with him, he would stay on the train, and let the conference go by the board. He had weighed the conference, obviously, against a platonic interlude, and made the sensible decision. But she stifled her vanity, and said to herself that she was glad that he was showing some signs of self-respect; in the queer, business-English letters he had written her, and on the phone for an hour at a time at her father's house, he had been too shockingly abject.

She let him get off the train, still talking happily, pressed his hand warmly but did not kiss him.

It was three weeks before he came to see her in her New York apartment, and then, she could tell, he was convalescent. He had become more critical of her and more self-assured. Her one and a half rooms in Greenwich Village gave him claustrophobia, he declared, and when she pointed out to him that the apartment was charming, he stated flatly that it was not the kind of place he liked, nor the kind of place she ought to be living in. He was more the businessman and less the suitor, and though he continued to ask her to marry him, she felt that the request was somewhat formal; it was only when he tried to make love to her that his real, hopeless, humble ardor showed itself once more. She fought him off, though she had an inclination to yield, if only to re-establish her ascendancy over him. They went to the theater two nights, and danced, and drank champagne, and the third morning he phoned her from his hotel that he

had a stomach attack and would have to go home to Cleveland with a doctor.

More than a month went by before she saw him again. This time he refused to come to her apartment, but insisted that she meet him at his suite in the Ambassador. They passed a moderate evening; the man contented himself with dining at Longchamps. He bought her a large Brie cheese at the Voisin down the street, and told her an anti-New-Deal joke. Just below the surface of his genial manner, there was an hostility that hurt her. She found that she was extending herself to please him. All her gestures grew over-feminine and demonstrative, the lift of her eyebrows was a shade too arch. Like a *passée* belle, she was overplaying herself. I must let go, she told herself, the train is pulling out, if I hang on, I'll be dragged along at its wheels. She made him take her home early.

A little later she received a duck he had shot in Virginia. She did not know how to cook it and it stayed in her icebox so long that the neighbors complained of the smell.

When she got a letter from him that had been dictated to his stenographer, she knew that his splurge was over. After that, she saw him once—for cocktails. He ordered double Martinis and got a little drunk. Then his friendliness revived briefly, and he begged her with tears in his eyes to "forget all this red nonsense and remember that you're just your father's little girl at heart." Walking home alone, trying to decide whether to eat in a tearoom or cook herself a chop, she felt flat and sad, but in the end she was glad that she had never told him of her broken engagement.

When her father died, the man must have read the account in the papers, for she got a telegram that read SINCEREST CONDOLENCES. YOU HAVE LOST THE BEST FRIEND YOU WILL EVER HAVE. She did not file it away with the other messages, but tore it up carefully and threw it into the wastebasket. It would have been dreadful if anyone had seen it.



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## *PART IX*

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### ***FICTION AND IMAGE: THE SYMBOLIC MODE***

In the chapter from **The Forgotten Language** reproduced in Part V, Erich Fromm discussed the nature of symbolic language from the psychoanalytic point of view. The student might profit from a second glance at what Fromm has to say, for in general, his distinctions apply to literary discussions too. Here we shall be interested in the use of discrete figures, or images, as they begin to assume greater emphasis in a work of fiction. Images are in one sense ever present in language. It is hard to think of "chair" without any visual associations whatever with the physical sensations which make up one's memory of chairs. The term "imagery" refers to this visual component of linguistic association.

Writers may not **choose** to emphasize the visual or tactile aspects of a given image in a particular story. The reader perhaps visualizes the raisins used to purchase love in Gregory's story. He knows, too, that sufficient numbers of raisins will keep Ara alive. Raisins, like "bread" in many other contexts, represent the capacity of the body to meet its physical needs for staying alive. But Gregory places no great emphasis on the figure itself in his story.

Imagery is an aspect of diction. For example, in Rooney's story, we find a consistent emphasis on the goggles worn by the motocyclists. The goggles are more than part of the uniform, they are that part of the uniform which Rooney chooses to emphasize. Little by little we begin to see the goggles in association with the hiddenness of the individual personality in the gang. The image of the goggles, by the author's repetition, receives such emphasis that one could effectively describe its use as a device. One might meaningfully consider the use of that image in relation to other aspects of the story, such as thematic interest.

Similarly, in "Death of a Traveling Salesman," we find recurring references to "bed": the grandmother's "big feather bed," Bowman's "wishing he were back in bed," his wanting "to go to bed and sleep." Even the drift of a cloud reminds him of "the bolster of his grandmother's bed," and when his car goes over a bank, tottering to rest, he sees it as "a grotesque child in a dark cradle." These are not random choices. Eudora Welty is characterizing Bowman's state of mind. Even his name fits the humbling events that take place in the story.

Bowman has been thinking about his grandmother. It makes no difference that Sonny's wife is young, he sees her as older, like his mother, like his grandmother. Further, his attitude toward her is that of a helpless, frustrated child. When he asks for help, he remembers the feeling of sinking "submissively into the pillows to wait for his medicine." Welty is using the figure of the bed to intensify the reader's sense of Bowman's helplessness, of his wish to be cared for, waited on, and loved. When Bowman refuses to ask for Sonny's bed, we know how much he wants to sleep in it, and how much he longs for all that Sonny possesses.

Of course, the bed functions as a natural figure of fecundity, especially in any context where a married woman is pregnant. Welty intensifies the sense of Sonny's virility as a male by emphasizing Bowman's totally passive relations with women. He has desperately tried to appear aggressive:

... he was a man who always wore rather wide-brimmed black hats, and in the wavy hotel mirrors had looked something like a bull-fighter, as he paused for that inevitable instant on the landing, walking downstairs to supper. . . .

Similarly, Bowman has always tried to pay for everything given him by woman. The woman who had befriended him during his

illness and of course the many women encountered during his career as a salesman. Now he tries to get Sonny and his wife to take money from him. Of course, in terms of the contrasts working in the story, money is symbolic of sterility; this is so because Bowman has money, and Sonny doesn't. In contrast, Sonny, like Prometheus, fetches fire; though he has no car, he knows how to get one out of a ditch. All of the images associated with Sonny suggest masculinity and self-reliance. Sonny can retrieve a car, father a child, make a fire—and all with the same ease as he brews whisky.

Sonny refuses to sell anything that belongs to him. Instead (once he is sure Bowman is no revenuer), he offers the hospitality of his house and table, for this generosity (which, appropriately, intensifies Bowman's resentment toward him) is further evidence of his power.

Notice, too, how other images intensely amplify the contrasting themes of fecundity and impotence, life and death. Bowman worries about the lamp, which the woman fails to clean with sufficient haste to suit him. In Bowman's usual ostentatious manner, he places money inside the lamp, before running away to his death. But before he leaves, the sounds of life—the running stream, the dying fire, the beating of his own heart—have overwhelmed him with fear. Are there similar indications in the imagery of "Flowering Judas" of the protagonist's state of mind? Compare the imagery of the titles of the two stories. What means does Porter use to characterize Laura? Braggioni? If fecundity and impotence are themes intensified by the imagery of Welty's story, what themes run through "Flowering Judas"? Of what importance is Laura's dress? Her occupation? Her virginity? Are there religious meanings in this story? (What do we mean by "religious" here?)

One of the values of the symbolic mode of expression is its restraint. We try to paraphrase certain of the implications of the imagery in the three stories. Does the meaning change as we do so? Does the tone or intensity change? Suppose, rather than the diction of the closing paragraph of "Flowering Judas" ("Then eat these flowers . . ."), Porter had described Laura's inner state of mind. The point is, of course, that the symbolic mode allows the author to imply much more than he says openly. The language of that closing section is rich in its associations. Porter need not tell the reader how Laura feels toward Eugenio; the reader infers her state of mind from the diction, and especially from the imagery of the passage. The question is, Would all students grasp the same meanings from these figures? Are the symbols in these stories ambiguous or vague? What is the difference between ambiguity and vagueness?

Much of one's life is involved with symbolic language and symbolic gestures. We salute the flag, we shake hands, we wear

rings on certain fingers. Even the way we sit at table may have symbolic meanings deeply rooted in our culture. Advertisers are keenly aware of symbolism, and they rely on it in implying the connection between the lovely, well-dressed New York model and the new car they wish to sell. Understanding symbols is only one more aspect of understanding language. If we wish to understand and describe an author's use of a symbolic figure, we must attend very carefully to each instance of its use; we must listen for nuances and implied relations to other features in the language of the story. Our job, in short, is to focus on the applicable details, for only then will their interrelations make proper sense.

The term "symbol" need not intimidate anyone. We live with symbols and with symbolic gestures every day. The raised eyebrow does not mean only that my wife raises her eyebrow, not even that she **wishes** to raise her eyebrow. It may mean that she disapproves of my second drink before dinner. The gesture conveys a sense or meaning more complicated than the gesture itself. The figure of the bed in Welty's story **functions** to imply more than the mental association of a piece of furniture with such and such a practical use. "Bed" in this story symbolizes infantile passivity, motherly and grandmotherly care, security, and love. But it also represents potency and fertility. From a literary standpoint, it is the **use** of the word "bed" in the story which informs us of these associations. In other words, the use of a word is what makes a word "symbolic." The notion of use is what literary critics imply when they speak of "context." The American flag is not a symbol when it is used for fuel by an Australian bushman. But when it is burned outside the American embassy in Moscow, it is a symbol. It is not the flag itself, but the situation which makes one act symbolic, and the other not. The student of language, then, keeps his eye on the particular **use** of language in a literary artifact.

# THE RIVER

FLANNERY O'CONNOR



The child stood glum and limp in the middle of the dark living room while his father pulled him into a plaid coat. His right arm was hung in the sleeve but the father buttoned the coat anyway and pushed him forward toward a pale spotted hand that stuck through the half-open door.

"He ain't fixed right," a loud voice said from the hall.

"Well then for Christ's sake fix him," the father muttered. "It's six o'clock in the morning." He was in his bathrobe and barefooted. When he got the child to the door and tried to shut it, he found her looming in it, a speckled skeleton in a long pea-green coat and felt helmet.

"And his and my carfare," she said. "It'll be twict we have to ride the car."

He went in the bedroom again to get the money and when he came back, she and the boy were both standing in the middle of the room. She was taking stock. "I couldn't smell those dead cigarette butts long if I was ever to come sit with you," she said, shaking him down in his coat.

"Here's the change," the father said. He went to the door and opened it wide and waited.

After she had counted the money she slipped it somewhere inside her coat and walked over to a watercolor hanging near the phonograph. "I know what time it is," she said, peering closely at the

black lines crossing into broken planes of violent color. "I ought to My shift goes on at 10 P.M. and don't get off till 5 and it takes me one hour to ride the Vine Street car "

"Oh, I see," he said, "well, we'll expect him back tonight, about eight or nine?"

"Maybe later," she said "We're going to the river to a healing. This particular preacher don't get around this way often. I wouldn't have paid for that," she said, nodding at the painting, "I would have drew it myself "

"All right, Mrs Connin, we'll see you then," he said, drumming on the door.

A toneless voice called from the bedroom, "Bring me an icepack "

"Too bad his mamma's sick," Mrs Connin said "What's her trouble?"

"We don't know," he muttered.

"We'll ask the preacher to pray for her He's healed a lot of folks The Reverend Bevel Summers Maybe she ought to see him sometime "

"Maybe so," he said "We'll see you tonight," and he disappeared into the bedroom and left them to go

The little boy stared at her silently, his nose and eyes running He was four or five He had a long face and bulging chin and half-shut eyes set far apart He seemed mute and patient, like an old sheep waiting to be let out.

"You'll like this preacher," she said "The Reverend Bevel Summers. You ought to hear him sing "

The bedroom door opened suddenly and the father stuck his head out and said, "Good-by, old man. Have a good time."

"Good-by," the little boy said and jumped as if he had been shot.

Mrs Connin gave the watercolor another look. Then they went out into the hall and rang for the elevator "I wouldn't have drew it," she said.

Outside the gray morning was blocked off on either side by the unlit empty buildings "It's going to fair up later," she said, "but this is the last time we'll be able to have any preaching at the river this year Wipe your nose, Sugar Boy "

He began rubbing his sleeve across it but she stopped him "That ain't nice," she said. "Where's your handkerchief?"

He put his hands in his pockets and pretended to look for it while she waited. "Some people don't care how they send one off," she murmured to her reflection in the coffee shop window. "You pervide" She took a red and blue flowered handkerchief out of her pocket and stooped down and began to work on his nose. "Now blow," she said and he blew. "You can borry it. Put it in your pocket."

He folded it up and put it in his pocket carefully and they

walked on to the corner and leaned against the side of a closed drug-store to wait for the car. Mrs. Connin turned up her coat collar so that it met her hat in the back. Her eyelids began to droop and she looked as if she might go to sleep against the wall. The little boy put a slight pressure on her hand.

"What's your name?" she asked in a drowsy voice. "I don't know but only your last name. I should have found out your first name."

His name was Harry Ashfield and he had never thought at any time before of changing it. "Bevel," he said.

Mrs. Connin raised herself from the wall. "Why ain't that a coincident!" she said. "I told you that's the name of this preacher!"

"Bevel," he repeated.

She stood looking down at him as if he had become a marvel to her. "I'll have to see you meet him today," she said. "He's no ordinary preacher. He's a healer. He couldn't do nothing for Mr. Connin though. Mr. Connin didn't have the faith but he said he would try anything once. He had this griping in his gut."

The trolley appeared as a yellow spot at the end of the deserted street.

"He's gone to the government hospital now," she said, "and they taken one-third of his stomach. I tell him he better thank Jesus for what he's got left but he says he ain't thanking nobody. Well I declare," she murmured, "Bevel!"

They walked out to the tracks to wait. "Will he heal me?" Bevel asked.

"What you got?"

"I'm hungry," he decided finally.

"Didn't you have your breakfast?"

"I didn't have time to be hungry yet then," he said.

"Well when we get home we'll both have us something," she said. "I'm ready myself."

They got on the car and sat down a few seats behind the driver and Mrs. Connin took Bevel on her knees. "Now you be a good boy," she said, "and let me get some sleep. Just don't get off my lap." She lay her head back and as he watched, gradually her eyes closed and her mouth fell open to show a few long scattered teeth, some gold and some darker than her face; she began to whistle and blow like a musical skeleton. There was no one in the car but themselves and the driver and when he saw she was asleep, he took out the flowered handkerchief and unfolded it and examined it carefully. Then he folded it up again and unzipped a place in the innerlining of his coat and hid it in there and shortly he went to sleep himself.

Her house was a half-mile from the end of the car line, set back a little from the road. It was tan paper brick with a porch across the

front of it and a tin top. On the porch there were three little boys of different sizes with identical speckled faces and one tall girl who had her hair up in so many aluminum curlers that it glared like the roof. The three boys followed them inside and closed in on Bevel. They looked at him silently, not smiling.

"That's Bevel," Mrs. Connin said, taking off her coat. "It's a coincidence he's named the same as the preacher. These boys are J. C., Spivey, and Sinclair, and that's Sarah Mildred on the porch. Take off that coat and hang it on the bed post, Bevel."

The three boys watched him while he unbuttoned the coat and took it off. Then they watched him hang it on the bed post and then they stood, watching the coat. They turned abruptly and went out the door and had a conference on the porch.

Bevel stood looking around him at the room. It was part kitchen and part bedroom. The entire house was two rooms and two porches. Close to his foot the tail of a light-colored dog moved up and down between two floor boards as he scratched his back on the underside of the house. Bevel jumped on it but the hound was experienced and had already withdrawn when his feet hit the spot.

The walls were filled with pictures and calendars. There were two round photographs of an old man and woman with collapsed mouths and another picture of a man whose eyebrows dashed out of two bushes of hair and clashed in a heap on the bridge of his nose, the rest of his face stuck out like a bare cliff to fall from. "That's Mr. Connin," Mrs. Connin said, standing back from the stove for a second to admire the face with him, "but it don't favor him any more." Bevel turned from Mr. Connin to a colored picture over the bed of a man wearing a white sheet. He had long hair and a gold circle around his head and he was sawing on a board while some children stood watching him. He was going to ask who that was when the three boys came in again and motioned for him to follow them. He thought of crawling under the bed and hanging onto one of the legs but the three boys only stood there, speckled and silent, waiting, and after a second he followed them at a little distance out on the porch and around the corner of the house. They started off through a field of rough yellow weeds to the hog pen, a five-foot boarded square full of shoats, which they intended to ease him over into. When they reached it, they turned and waited silently, leaning against the side.

He was coming very slowly, deliberately bumping his feet together as if he had trouble walking. Once he had been beaten up in the park by some strange boys when his sitter forgot him, but he hadn't known anything was going to happen that time until it was over. He began to smell a strong odor of garbage and to hear the noises of a wild animal. He stopped a few feet from the pen and waited, pale but dogged.



The three boys didn't move. Something seemed to have happened to them. They stared over his head as if they saw something coming behind him but he was afraid to turn his own head and look. Their speckles were pale and their eyes were still and gray as glass. Only their ears twitched slightly. Nothing happened. Finally, the one in the middle said, "She'd kill us," and turned, dejected and hacked, and climbed up on the pen and hung over, staring in.

Bevel sat down on the ground, dazed with relief, and grinned up at them.

The one sitting on the pen glanced at him severely. "Hey you," he said after a second, "if you can't climb up and see these pigs you can lift that bottom board off and look in thataway." He appeared to offer this as a kindness.

Bevel had never seen a real pig but he had seen a pig in a book and knew they were small fat pink animals with curly tails and round grinning faces and bow ties. He leaned forward and pulled eagerly at the board.

"Pull harder," the littlest boy said. "It's nice and rotten. Just lif out thet nail."

He eased a long reddish nail out of the soft wood.

"Now you can lift up the board and put your face to the . . ." a quiet voice began.

He had already done it and another face, gray, wet and sour, was pushing into his, knocking him down and back as it scraped out under the plank. Something snorted over him and charged back again, rolling him over and pushing him up from behind and then sending him forward, screaming through the yellow field, while it bounded behind.

The three Connins watched from where they were. The one sitting on the pen held the loose board back with his dangling foot. Their stern faces didn't brighten any but they seemed to become less taut, as if some great need had been partly satisfied. "Maw ain't going to like him lettin out thet hawg," the smallest one said.

Mrs. Connin was on the back porch and caught Bevel up as he reached the steps. The hog ran under the house and subsided, panting, but the child screamed for five minutes. When she had finally calmed him down, she gave him his breakfast and let him sit on her lap while he ate it. The shoat climbed the two steps onto the back porch and stood outside the screen door, looking in with his head lowered sullenly. He was long-legged and humpbacked and part of one of his ears had been bitten off.

"Git away!" Mrs. Connin shouted. "That one yonder favors Mr. Paradise that has the gas station," she said. "You'll see him today at the healing. He's got the cancer over his ear. He always comes to show he ain't been healed."

The shoat stood squinting a few seconds longer and then moved off slowly. "I don't want to see him," Bevel said.

They walked to the river, Mrs. Connin in front with him and the three boys strung out behind and Sarah Mildred, the tall girl, at the end to holler if one of them ran out on the road. They looked like the skeleton of an old boat with two pointed ends, sailing slowly on the edge of the highway. The white Sunday sun followed at a little distance, climbing fast through a scum of gray cloud as if it meant to overtake them. Bevel walked on the outside edge, holding Mrs. Connin's hand and looking down into the orange and purple gulley that dropped off from the concrete.

It occurred to him that he was lucky this time that they had found Mrs. Connin who would take you away for the day instead of an ordinary sitter who only sat where you lived or went to the park. You found out more when you left where you lived. He had found out already this morning that he had been made by a carpenter named Jesus Christ. Before he had thought it had been a doctor named Sladewall, a fat man with a yellow mustache who gave him shots and thought his name was Herbert, but this must have been a joke. They joked a lot where he lived. If he had thought about it before, he would have thought Jesus Christ was a word like "oh" or "damn" or "God," or maybe somebody who had cheated them out of something sometime. When he had asked Mrs. Connin who the man in the sheet in the picture over her bed was, she had looked at him a while with her mouth open. Then she had said, "That's Jesus," and she had kept on looking at him.

In a few minutes she had got up and got a book out of the other room. "See here," she said, turning over the cover, "this belonged to my great grandmamma. I wouldn't part with it for nothing on earth." She ran her fingers under some brown writing on a spotted page. "Emma Stevens Oakley, 1832," she said. "Ain't that something to have? And every word of it the gospel truth." She turned the next page and read him the name "The Life of Jesus Christ for Readers Under Twelve." Then she read him the book.

It was a small book, pale brown on the outside with gold edges and a smell like old putty. It was full of pictures, one of the carpenter driving a crowd of pigs out of a man. They were real pigs, gray and sour-looking, and Mrs. Connin said Jesus had driven them all out of this one man. When she finished reading, she let him sit on the floor and look at the pictures again.

Just before they left for the healing, he had managed to get the book inside his innerlining without her seeing him. Now it made his coat hang down a little farther on one side than the other. His mind was dreamy and serene as they walked along and when they turned

off the highway onto a long red clay road winding between banks of honeysuckle, he began to make wild leaps and pull forward on her hand as if he wanted to dash off and snatch the sun which was rolling away ahead of them now

They walked on the dirt road for a while and then they crossed a field stippled with purple weeds and entered the shadows of a wood where the ground was covered with thick pine needles. He had never been in woods before and he walked carefully, looking from side to side as if he were entering a strange country. They moved along a bridle path that twisted downhill through crackling red leaves, and once, catching at a branch to keep himself from slipping, he looked into two frozen green-gold eyes enclosed in the darkness of a tree hole. At the bottom of the hill, the woods opened suddenly onto a pasture dotted here and there with black and white cows and sloping down, tier after tier, to a broad orange stream where the reflection of the sun was set like a diamond.

There were people standing on the near bank in a group, singing. Long tables were set up behind them and a few cars and trucks were parked in a road that came up by the river. They crossed the pasture, hurrying, because Mrs. Connin, using her hand for a shed over her eyes, saw the preacher already standing out in the water. She dropped her basket on one of the tables and pushed the three boys in front of her into the knot of people so that they wouldn't linger by the food. She kept Bevel by the hand and eased her way up to the front.

The preacher was standing about ten feet out in the stream where the water came up to his knees. He was a tall youth in khaki trousers that he had rolled up higher than the water. He had on a blue shirt and a red scarf around his neck but no hat and his light-colored hair was cut in sideburns that curved into the hollows of his cheeks. His face was all bone and red light reflected from the river. He looked as if he might have been nineteen years old. He was singing in a high twangy voice, above the singing on the bank, and he kept his hands behind him and his head tilted back.

He ended the hymn on a high note and stood silent, looking down at the water and shifting his feet in it. Then he looked up at the people on the bank. They stood close together, waiting; their faces were solemn but expectant and every eye was on him. He shifted his feet again.

"Maybe I know why you come," he said in the twangy voice, "maybe I don't.

"If you ain't come for Jesus, you ain't come for me. If you just come to see can you leave your pain in the river, you ain't come for Jesus. You can't leave your pain in the river," he said. "I never told nobody that." He stopped and looked down at his knees.

"I seen you cure a woman oncet!" a sudden high voice shouted

from the hump of people. "Seen that woman git up and walk straight where she had limped in!"

The preacher lifted one foot and then the other. He seemed almost but not quite to smile. "You might as well go home if that's what you come for," he said.

Then he lifted his head and arms and shouted, "Listen to what I got to say, you people! There ain't but one river and that's the River of Life, made out of Jesus' Blood. That's the river you have to lay your pain in, in the River of Faith, in the River of Life, in the River of Love, in the rich red river of Jesus' Blood, you people!"

His voice grew soft and musical. "All the rivers come from that one River and go back to it like it was the ocean sea and if you believe, you can lay your pain in that River and get rid of it because that's the River that was made to carry sin. It's a River full of pain itself, pain itself, moving toward the Kingdom of Christ, to be washed away, slow, you people, slow as this here old red water river round my feet

"Listen," he sang, "I read in Mark about an unclean man, I read in Luke about a blind man, I read in John about a dead man! Oh you people hear! The same blood that makes this River red, made that leper clean, made that blind man stare, made that dead man leap! You people with trouble," he cried, "lay it in that River of Blood, lay it in that River of Pain, and watch it move away toward the Kingdom of Christ"

While he preached, Bevel's eyes followed drowsily the slow circles of two silent birds revolving high in the air. Across the river there was a low red and gold grove of sassafras with hills of dark blue trees behind it and an occasional pine jutting over the skyline. Behind, in the distance, the city rose like a cluster of warts on the side of the mountain. The birds revolved downward and dropped lightly in the top of the highest pine and sat hunch-shouldered as if they were supporting the sky

"If it's this River of Life you want to lay your pain in, then come up," the preacher said, "and lay your sorrow here. But don't be thinking this is the last of it because this old red river don't end here. This old red suffering stream goes on, you people, slow to the Kingdom of Christ. This old red river is good to Baptize in, good to lay your faith in, good to lay your pain in, but it ain't this muddy water here that saves you. I been all up and down this river this week," he said. "Tuesday I was in Fortune Lake, next day in Ideal, Friday me and my wife drove to Lulawillow to see a sick man there. Them people didn't see no healing," he said and his face burned redder for a second. "I never said they would."

While he was talking a fluttering figure had begun to move forward with a kind of butterfly movement—an old woman with flapping

arms whose head wobbled as if it might fall off any second. She managed to lower herself at the edge of the bank and let her arms churn in the water. Then she bent farther and pushed her face down in it and raised herself up finally, streaming wet; and still flapping, she turned a time or two in a blind circle until someone reached out and pulled her back into the group.

"She's been that way for thirteen years," a rough voice shouted. "Pass the hat and give this kid his money. That's what he's here for." The shout, directed out to the boy in the river, came from a huge old man who sat like a humped stone on the bumper of a long ancient gray automobile. He had on a gray hat that was turned down over one ear and up over the other to expose a purple bulge on his left temple. He sat bent forward with his hands hanging between his knees and his small eyes half closed.

Bevel stared at him once and then moved into the folds of Mrs. Connin's coat and hid himself.

The boy in the river glanced at the old man quickly and raised his fist. "Believe Jesus or the devil!" he cried. "Testify to one or the other!"

"I know from my own self-experience," a woman's mysterious voice called from the knot of people, "I know from it that this preacher can heal. My eyes have been opened! I testify to Jesus!"

The preacher lifted his arms quickly and began to repeat all that he had said before about the River and the Kingdom of Christ and the old man sat on the bumper, fixing him with a narrow squint. From time to time Bevel stared at him again from around Mrs. Connin.

A man in overalls and a brown coat leaned forward and dipped his hand in the water quickly and shook it and leaned back, and a woman held a baby over the edge of the bank and splashed its feet with water. One man moved a little distance away and sat down on the bank and took off his shoes and waded out into the stream; he stood there for a few minutes with his face tilted as far back as it would go, then he waded back and put on his shoes. All this time, the preacher sang and did not appear to watch what went on.

As soon as he stopped singing, Mrs. Connin lifted Bevel up and said, "Listen here, preacher, I got a boy from town today that I'm keeping. His mamma's sick and he wants you to pray for her. And this is a coincident—his name is Bevel! Bevel," she said, turning to look at the people behind her, "same as his. Ain't that a coincident, though?"

There were some murmurs and Bevel turned and grinned over her shoulder at the faces looking at him. "Bevel," he said in a loud jaunty voice.

"Listen," Mrs. Connin said, "have you ever been Baptized, Bevel?" He only grinned.

"I suspect he ain't ever been Baptized," Mrs. Connin said, raising her eyebrows at the preacher.

"Swang him over here," the preacher said and took a stride forward and caught him

He held him in the crook of his arm and looked at the grinning face Bevel rolled his eyes in a comical way and thrust his face forward, close to the preacher's. "My name is Bevvvvuuuuul," he said in a loud deep voice and let the tip of his tongue slide across his mouth.

The preacher didn't smile His bony face was rigid and his narrow gray eyes reflected the almost colorless sky There was a loud laugh from the old man sitting on the car bumper and Bevel grasped the back of the preacher's collar and held it tightly. The grin had already disappeared from his face He had the sudden feeling that this was not a joke Where he lived everything was a joke From the preacher's face, he knew immediately that nothing the preacher said or did was a joke. "My mother named me that," he said quickly.

"Have you ever been Baptized?" the preacher asked.

"What's that?" he murmured

"If I Baptize you," the preacher said, "you'll be able to go to the Kingdom of Christ You'll be washed in the river of suffering, son, and you'll go by the deep river of life. Do you want that?"

"Yes," the child said, and thought, I won't go back to the apartment then, I'll go under the river.

"You won't be the same again," the preacher said. "You'll count " Then he turned his face to the people and began to preach and Bevel looked over his shoulder at the pieces of the white sun scattered in the river Suddenly the preacher said, "All right, I'm going to Baptize you now," and without more warning, he tightened his hold and swung him upside down and plunged his head into the water. He held him under while he said the words of Baptism and then he jerked him up again and looked sternly at the gasping child Bevel's eyes were dark and dilated. "You count now," the preacher said "You didn't even count before "

The little boy was too shocked to cry. He spit out the muddy water and rubbed his wet sleeve into his eyes and over his face.

"Don't forget his mamma," Mrs Connin called. "He wants you to pray for his mamma. She's sick "

"Lord," the preacher said, "we pray for somebody in affliction who isn't here to testify. Is your mother sick in the hospital?" he asked "Is she in pain?"

The child stared at him "She hasn't got up yet," he said in a high dazed voice. "She has a hangover." The air was so quiet he could hear the broken pieces of the sun knocking in the water.

The preacher looked angry and startled The red drained out of his face and the sky appeared to darken in his eyes. There was a loud

guffaw from the bank and Mr. Paradise shouted, "Haw! Cure the afflicted woman with the hangover!" and began to beat his knee with his fist.

"He's had a long day," Mrs. Connin said, standing with him in the door of the apartment and looking sharply into the room where the party was going on. "I reckon it's past his regular bedtime." One of Bevel's eyes was closed and the other half closed; his nose was running and he kept his mouth open and breathed through it. The damp plaid coat dragged down on one side.

That would be her, Mrs. Connin decided, in the black britches—long black satin britches and barefoot sandals and red toenails. She was lying on half the sofa, with her knees crossed in the air and her head propped on the arm. She didn't get up.

"Hello Harry," she said. "Did you have a big day?" She had a long pale face, smooth and blank, and straight sweet-potato-colored hair, pulled back.

The father went off to get the money. There were two other couples. One of the men, blond with little violet-blue eyes, leaned out of his chair and said, "Well Harry, old man, have a big day?"

"His name ain't Harry. It's Bevel," Mrs. Connin said.

"His name is Harry," *she* said from the sofa. "Whoever heard of anybody named Bevel?"

The little boy had seemed to be going to sleep on his feet, his head drooping farther and farther forward; he pulled it back suddenly and opened one eye; the other was stuck.

"He told me this morning his name was Bevel," Mrs. Connin said in a shocked voice. "The same as our preacher. We been all day at a preaching and healing at the river. He said his name was Bevel, the same as the preacher's. That's what he told me."

"Bevel!" his mother said. "My God! what a name."

"This preacher is name Bevel and there's no better preacher around," Mrs. Connin said. "And furthermore," she added in a defiant tone, "he Baptized this child this morning!"

His mother sat straight up. "Well the nerve!" she muttered.

"Furthermore," Mrs. Connin said, "he's a healer and he prayed for you to be healed."

"Healed!" she almost shouted. "Healed of what for Christ's sake?"

"Of your affliction," Mrs. Connin said icily.

The father had returned with the money and was standing near Mrs. Connin waiting to give it to her. His eyes were lined with red threads. "Go on, go on," he said, "I want to hear more about her affliction. The exact nature of it has escaped . . ." He waved the bill and his voice trailed off. "Healing by prayer is mighty inexpensive," he murmured.

Mrs Connin stood a second, staring into the room, with a skeleton's appearance of seeing everything. Then, without taking the money, she turned and shut the door behind her. The father swung around, smiling vaguely, and shrugged. The rest of them were looking at Harry. The little boy began to shamle toward the bedroom.

"Come here, Harry," his mother said. He automatically shifted his direction toward her without opening his eye any farther. "Tell me what happened today," she said when he reached her. She began to pull off his coat.

"I don't know," he muttered.

"Yes you do know," she said, feeling the coat heavier on one side. She unzipped the innerlining and caught the book and a dirty handkerchief as they fell out. "Where did you get these?"

"I don't know," he said and grabbed for them. "They're mine. She gave them to me."

She threw the handkerchief down and held the book too high for him to reach and began to read it, her face after a second assuming an exaggerated comical expression. The others moved around and looked at it over her shoulder. "My God," somebody said.

One of the men peered at it sharply from behind a thick pair of glasses. "That's valuable," he said. "That's a collector's item," and he took it away from the rest of them and retired to another chair.

"Don't let George go off with that," his girl said.

"I tell you it's valuable," George said. "1832."

Bevel shifted his direction again toward the room where he slept. He shut the door behind him and moved slowly in the darkness to the bed and sat down and took off his shoes and got under the cover. After a minute a shaft of light let in the tall silhouette of his mother. She tiptoed lightly across the room and sat down on the edge of his bed. "What did that dolt of a preacher say about me?" she whispered. "What lies have you been telling today, honey?"

He shut his eye and heard her voice from a long way away, as if he were under the river and she on top of it. She shook his shoulder. "Harry," she said, leaning down and putting her mouth to his ear, "tell me what he said." She pulled him into a sitting position and he felt as if he had been drawn up from under the river. "Tell me," she whispered and her bitter breath covered his face.

He saw the pale oval close to him in the dark. "He said I'm not the same now," he muttered. "I count."

After a second, she lowered him by his shirt front onto the pillow. She hung over him an instant and brushed her lips against his forehead. Then she got up and moved away, swaying her hips lightly through the shaft of light.

He didn't wake up early but the apartment was still dark and close



when he did. For a while he lay there, picking his nose and eyes. Then he sat up in bed and looked out the window. The sun came in palely, stained gray by the glass. Across the street at the Empire Hotel, a colored cleaning woman was looking down from an upper window, resting her face on her folded arms. He got up and put on his shoes and went to the bathroom and then into the front room. He ate two crackers spread with anchovy paste, that he found on the coffee table, and drank some ginger ale left in a bottle and looked around for his book but it was not there.

The apartment was silent except for the faint humming of the refrigerator. He went into the kitchen and found some raisin bread heels and spread a half jar of peanut butter between them and climbed up on the tall kitchen stool and sat chewing the sandwich slowly, wiping his nose every now and then on his shoulder. When he finished he found some chocolate milk and drank that. He would rather have had the ginger ale he saw but they left the bottle openers where he couldn't reach them. He studied what was left in the refrigerator for a while—some shriveled vegetables that she had forgot were there and a lot of brown oranges that she bought and didn't squeeze, there were three or four kinds of cheese and something fishy in a paper bag, the rest was a pork bone. He left the refrigerator door open and wandered back into the dark living room and sat down on the sofa.

He decided they would be out cold until one o'clock and that they would all have to go to a restaurant for lunch. He wasn't high enough for the table yet and the waiter would bring a highchair and he was too big for a highchair. He sat in the middle of the sofa, kicking it with his heels. Then he got up and wandered around the room, looking into the ashtrays at the butts as if this might be a habit. In his own room he had picture books and blocks but they were for the most part torn up; he found the way to get new ones was to tear up the ones he had. There was very little to do at any time but eat; however, he was not a fat boy.

He decided he would empty a few of the ashtrays on the floor. If he only emptied a few, she would think they had fallen. He emptied two, rubbing the ashes carefully into the rug with his finger. Then he lay on the floor for a while, studying his feet which he held up in the air. His shoes were still damp and he began to think about the river.

Very slowly, his expression changed as if he were gradually seeing appear what he didn't know he'd been looking for. Then all of a sudden he knew what he wanted to do.

He got up and tiptoed into their bedroom and stood in the dim light there, looking for her pocketbook. His glance passed her long pale arm hanging off the edge of the bed down to the floor, and across the white mound his father made, and past the crowded bureau, until it rested on the pocketbook hung on the back of a chair. He took

a car-token out of it and half a package of Life Savers. Then he left the apartment and caught the car at the corner. He hadn't taken a suitcase because there was nothing from there he wanted to keep.

He got off the car at the end of the line and started down the road he and Mrs. Connin had taken the day before. He knew there wouldn't be anybody at her house because the three boys and the girl went to school and Mrs. Connin had told him she went out to clean. He passed her yard and walked on the way they had gone to the river. The paper brick houses were far apart and after a while the dirt place to walk on ended and he had to walk on the edge of the highway. The sun was pale yellow and high and hot.

He passed a shack with an orange gas pump in front of it but he didn't see the old man looking out at nothing in particular from the doorway. Mr. Paradise was having an orange drink. He finished it slowly, squinting over the bottle at the small plaid-coated-figure disappearing down the road. Then he set the empty bottle on a bench and, still squinting, wiped his sleeve over his mouth. He went in the shack and picked out a peppermint stick, a foot long and two inches thick, from the candy shelf, and stuck it in his hip pocket. Then he got in his car and drove slowly down the highway after the boy.

By the time Bevel came to the field speckled with purple weeds, he was dusty and sweating and he crossed it at a trot to get into the woods as fast as he could. Once inside, he wandered from tree to tree, trying to find the path they had taken yesterday. Finally he found a line worn in the pine needles and followed it until he saw the steep trail twisting down through the trees.

Mr. Paradise had left his automobile back some way on the road and had walked to the place where he was accustomed to sit almost every day, holding an unbaited fishline in the water while he stared at the river passing in front of him. Anyone looking at him from a distance would have seen an old boulder half hidden in the bushes.

Bevel didn't see him at all. He only saw the river, shimmering reddish yellow, and bounded into it with his shoes and his coat on and took a gulp. He swallowed some and spit the rest out and then he stood there in water up to his chest and looked around him. The sky was a clear pale blue, all in one piece—except for the hole the sun made—and fringed around the bottom with treetops. His coat floated to the surface and surrounded him like a strange gay lily pad and he stood grinning in the sun. He intended not to fool with preachers any more but to Baptize himself and to keep on going this time until he found the Kingdom of Christ in the river. He didn't mean to waste any more time. He put his head under the water at once and pushed forward.

In a second he began to gasp and sputter and his head reappeared on the surface; he started under again and the same thing happened.

The river wouldn't have him. He tried again and came up, choking. This was the way it had been when the preacher held him under—he had had to fight with something that pushed him back in the face. He stopped and thought suddenly. *it's another joke, it's just another joke!* He thought how far he had come for nothing and he began to hit and splash and kick the filthy river. His feet were already treading on nothing. He gave one low cry of pain and indignation. Then he heard a shout and turned his head and saw something like a giant pig bounding after him, shaking a red and white club and shouting. He plunged under once and this time, the waiting current caught him like a long gentle hand and pulled him swiftly forward and down. For an instant he was overcome with surprise; then since he was moving quickly and knew that he was getting somewhere, all his fury and his fear left him.

Mr. Paradise's head appeared from time to time on the surface of the water. Finally, far downstream, the old man rose like some ancient monster and stood empty-handed, staring with his dull eyes as far down the river line as he could see.

# DEATH OF A TRAVELING SALESMAN

EUDORA WELTY



R. J. Bowman, who for fourteen years had traveled for a shoe company through Mississippi, drove his Ford along a rutted dirt path. It was a long day! The time did not seem to clear the noon hurdle and settle into soft afternoon. The sun, keeping its strength here even in winter, stayed at the top of the sky, and every time Bowman stuck his head out of the dusty car to stare up the road, it seemed to reach a long arm down and push against the top of his head, right through his hat—like the practical joke of an old drummer, long on the road. It made him feel all the more angry and helpless. He was feverish, and he was not quite sure of the way.

This was his first day back on the road after a long siege of influenza. He had had very high fever, and dreams, and had become weakened and pale, enough to tell the difference in the mirror, and he could not think clearly. . . . All afternoon, in the midst of his anger, and for no reason, he had thought of his dead grandmother. She had been a comfortable soul. Once more Bowman wished he could fall into the big feather bed that had been in her room. . . . Then he forgot her again.

This desolate hill country! And he seemed to be going the wrong way—it was as if he were going back, far back. There was not a house in sight. . . . There was no use wishing he were back in bed, though.

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By paying the hotel doctor his bill he had proved his recovery. He had not even been sorry when the pretty trained nurse said good-by. He did not like illness, he distrusted it, as he distrusted the road without signposts. It angered him. He had given the nurse a really expensive bracelet, just because she was packing up her bag and leaving.

But now—what if in fourteen years on the road he had never been ill before and never had an accident? His record was broken, and he had even begun almost to question it. . . . He had gradually put up at better hotels, in the bigger towns, but weren't they all, eternally, stuffy in summer and drafty in winter? Women? He could only remember little rooms within little rooms, like a nest of Chinese paper boxes, and if he thought of one woman he saw the worn loneliness that the furniture of that room seemed built of. And he himself—he was a man who always wore rather wide-brimmed black hats, and in the wavy hotel mirrors had looked something like a bullfighter, as he paused for that inevitable instant on the landing, walking downstairs to supper. . . . He leaned out of the car again, and once more the sun pushed at his head.

Bowman had wanted to reach Beulah by dark, to go to bed and sleep off his fatigue. As he remembered, Beulah was fifty miles away from the last town, on a graveled road. This was only a cow trail. How had he ever come to such a place? One hand wiped the sweat from his face, and he drove on.

He had made the Beulah trip before. But he had never seen this hill or this petering-out path before—or that cloud, he thought shyly, looking up and then down quickly—any more than he had seen this day before. Why did he not admit he was simply lost and had been for miles? . . . He was not in the habit of asking the way of strangers, and these people never knew where the very roads they lived on went to; but then he had not even been close enough to anyone to call out. People standing in the fields now and then, or on top of the haystacks, had been too far away, looking like leaning sticks or weeds, turning a little at the solitary rattle of his car across their countryside, watching the pale sobered winter dust where it chunked out behind like big squashes down the road. The stares of these distant people had followed him solidly like a wall, impenetrable, behind which they turned back after he had passed.

The cloud floated there to one side like the bolster on his grandmother's bed. It went over a cabin on the edge of a hill, where two bare chinaberry trees clutched at the sky. He drove through a heap of dead oak leaves, his wheels stirring their weightless sides to make a silvery melancholy whistle as the car passed through their bed. No car had been along this way ahead of him. Then he saw that he was on the edge of a ravine that fell away, a red erosion, and that this was indeed the road's end.

He pulled the brake. But it did not hold, though he put all his strength into it. The car, tipped toward the edge, rolled a little. Without doubt, it was going over the bank.

He got out quietly, as though some mischief had been done him and he had his dignity to remember. He lifted his bag and sample case out, set them down, and stood back and watched the car roll over the edge. He heard something—not the crash he was listening for, but a slow, unuproarious crackle. Rather distastefully he went to look over, and he saw that his car had fallen into a tangle of immense grapevines as thick as his arm, which caught it and held it, rocked it like a grotesque child in a dark cradle, and then, as he watched, concerned somehow that he was not still inside it, released it gently to the ground.

He sighed.

Where am I? he wondered with a shock. Why didn't I do something? All his anger seemed to have drifted away from him. There was the house, back on the hill. He took a bag in each hand and with almost childlike willingness went toward it. But his breathing came with difficulty, and he had to stop to rest.

It was a shotgun house, two rooms and an open passage between, perched on the hill. The whole cabin slanted a little under the heavy heaped-up vine that covered the roof, light and green, as though forgotten from summer. A woman stood in the passage.

He stopped still. Then all of a sudden his heart began to behave strangely. Like a rocket set off, it began to leap and expand into uneven patterns of beats which showered into his brain, and he could not think. But in scattering and falling it made no noise. It shot up with great power, almost elation, and fell gently, like acrobats into nets. It began to pound profoundly, then waited irresponsibly, hitting in some sort of inward mockery first at his ribs, then against his eyes, then under his shoulder blades, and against the roof of his mouth when he tried to say, "Good afternoon, madam." But he could not hear his heart—it was as quiet as ashes falling. This was rather comforting; still, it was shocking to Bowman to feel his heart beating at all.

Stock-still in his confusion, he dropped his bags, which seemed to drift in slow bulks gracefully through the air and to cushion themselves on the gray prostrate grass near the doorstep.

As for the woman standing there, he saw at once that she was old. Since she could not possibly hear his heart, he ignored the pounding and now looked at her carefully, and yet in his distraction dreamily, with his mouth open.

She had been cleaning the lamp, and held it, half blackened, half clear, in front of her. He saw her with the dark passage behind her. She was a big woman with a weather-beaten but unwrinkled face; her lips were held tightly together, and her eyes looked with a curious

dulled brightness into his. He looked at her shoes, which were like bundles. If it were summer she would be barefoot. . . . Bowman, who automatically judged a woman's age on sight, set her age at fifty. She wore a formless garment of some gray coarse material, rough-dried from a washing, from which her arms appeared pink and unexpectedly round. When she never said a word, and sustained her quiet pose of holding the lamp, he was convinced of the strength in her body.

"Good afternoon, madam," he said.

She stared on, whether at him or at the air around him he could not tell, but after a moment she lowered her eyes to show that she would listen to whatever he had to say.

"I wonder if you would be interested—" He tried once more. "An accident—my car . . ."

Her voice emerged low and remote, like a sound across a lake. "Sonny he ain't here."

"Sonny?"

"Sonny ain't here now."

Her son—a fellow able to bring my car up, he decided in blurred relief. He pointed down the hill "My car's in the bottom of the ditch. I'll need help."

"Sonny ain't here, but he'll be here."

She was becoming clearer to him and her voice stronger, and Bowman saw that she was stupid.

He was hardly surprised at the deepening postponement and tedium of his journey. He took a breath, and heard his voice speaking over the silent blows of his heart. "I was sick. I am not strong yet. . . . May I come in?"

He stooped and laid his big black hat over the handle on his bag. It was a humble motion, almost a bow, that instantly struck him as absurd and betraying of all his weakness. He looked up at the woman, the wind blowing his hair. He might have continued for a long time in this unfamiliar attitude; he had never been a patient man, but when he was sick he had learned to sink submissively into the pillows, to wait for his medicine. He waited on the woman.

Then she, looking at him with blue eyes, turned and held open the door, and after a moment Bowman, as if convinced in his action, stood erect and followed her in.

Inside, the darkness of the house touched him like a professional hand, the doctor's. The woman set the half-cleaned lamp on a table in the center of the room and pointed, also like a professional person, a guide, to a chair with a yellow cowhide seat. She herself crouched on the hearth, drawing her knees up under the shapeless dress.

At first he felt hopefully secure. His heart was quieter. The room was enclosed in the gloom of yellow pine boards. He could see the

other room, with the foot of an iron bed showing, across the passage. The bed had been made up with a red-and-yellow pieced quilt that looked like a map or a picture, a little like his grandmother's girlhood painting of Rome burning

He had ached for coolness, but in this room it was cold. He stared at the hearth with dead coals lying on it and iron pots in the corners. The hearth and smoked chimney were of the stone he had seen ribbing the hills, mostly slate. Why is there no fire? he wondered.

And it was so still. The silence of the fields seemed to enter and move familiarly through the house. The wind used the open hall. He felt that he was in a mysterious, quiet, cool danger. It was necessary to do what? . . . To talk.

"I have a nice line of women's low-priced shoes . . ." he said.

But the woman answered, "Sonny 'll be here. He's strong. Sonny 'll move your car."

"Where is he now?"

"Farms for Mr Redmond."

Mr Redmond. Mr Redmond. That was someone he would never have to encounter, and he was glad. Somehow the name did not appeal to him . . . In a flare of touchiness and anxiety, Bowman wished to avoid even mention of unknown men and their unknown farms.

"Do you two live here alone?" He was surprised to hear his old voice, chatty, confidential, inflected for selling shoes, asking a question like that—a thing he did not even want to know.

"Yes. We are alone."

He was surprised at the way she answered. She had taken a long time to say that. She had nodded her head in a deep way too. Had she wished to affect him with some sort of premonition? he wondered unhappily. Or was it only that she would not help him, after all, by talking with him? For he was not strong enough to receive the impact of unfamiliar things without a little talk to break their fall. He had lived a month in which nothing had happened except in his head and his body—an almost inaudible life of heartbeats and dreams that came back, a life of fever and privacy, a delicate life which had left him weak to the point of—what? Of begging. The pulse in his palm leapt like a trout in a brook.

He wondered over and over why the woman did not go ahead with cleaning the lamp. What prompted her to stay there across the room, silently bestowing her presence upon him? He saw that with her it was not a time for doing little tasks. Her face was grave; she was feeling how right she was. Perhaps it was only politeness. In docility he held his eyes stiffly wide; they fixed themselves on the woman's clasped hands as though she held the cord they were strung on.

Then, "Sonny's coming," she said.

He himself had not heard anything, but there came a man passing



the window and then plunging in at the door, with two hounds beside him. Sonny was a big enough man, with his belt slung low about his hips. He looked at least thirty. He had a hot, red face that was yet full of silence. He wore muddy blue pants and an old military coat stained and patched. World War? Bowman wondered. Great God, it was a Confederate coat. On the back of his light hair he had a wide filthy black hat which seemed to insult Bowman's own. He pushed down the dogs from his chest. He was strong, with dignity and heaviness in his way of moving. . . . There was the resemblance to his mother.

They stood side by side. . . . He must account again for his presence here.

"Sonny, this man, he had his car to run off over the precipice an' wants to know if you will git it out for him," the woman said after a few minutes.

Bowman could not even state his case.

Sonny's eyes lay upon him.

He knew he should offer explanations and show money—at least appear either penitent or authoritative. But all he could do was to shrug slightly.

Sonny brushed by him going to the window, followed by the eager dogs, and looked out. There was effort even in the way he was looking, as if he could throw his sight out like a rope. Without turning Bowman felt that his own eyes could have seen nothing. It was too far.

"Got me a mule out there an' got me a block an' tackle," said Sonny meaningfully. "I *could* catch me my mule an' git me my ropes, an' before long I'd git your car out the ravine."

He looked completely around the room, as if in meditation, his eyes roving in their own distance. Then he pressed his lips firmly and yet shyly together, and with the dogs ahead of him this time, he lowered his head and strode out. The hard earth sounded, cupping to his powerful way of walking—almost a stagger.

Mischievously, at the suggestion of those sounds, Bowman's heart leapt again. It seemed to walk about inside him.

"Sonny's goin' to do it," the woman said. She said it again, singing it almost, like a song. She was sitting in her place by the hearth.

Without looking out, he heard some shouts and the dogs barking and the pounding of hoofs in short runs on the hill. In a few minutes Sonny passed under the window with a rope, and there was a brown mule with quivering, shining, purple-looking ears. The mule actually looked in the window. Under its eyelashes it turned target-like eyes into his. Bowman averted his head and saw the woman looking serenely back at the mule, with only satisfaction in her face.

She sang a little more, under her breath. It occurred to him, and it seemed quite marvelous, that she was not really talking to him, but

rather following the thing that came about with words that were unconscious and part of her looking.

So he said nothing, and this time when he did not reply he felt a curious and strong emotion, not fear, rise up in him.

This time, when his heart leapt, something—his soul—seemed to leap too, like a little colt invited out of a pen. He stared at the woman while the frantic nimbleness of his feeling made his head sway. He could not move; there was nothing he could do, unless perhaps he might embrace this woman who sat there growing old and shapeless before him.

But he wanted to leap up, to say to her, I have been sick and I found out then, only then, how lonely I am. Is it too late? My heart puts up a struggle inside me, and you may have heard it, protesting against emptiness . . . It should be full, he would rush on to tell her, thinking of his heart now as a deep lake, it should be holding love like other hearts. It should be flooded with love. There would be a warm spring day . . . Come and stand in my heart, whoever you are, and a whole river would cover your feet and rise higher and take your knees in whirlpools, and draw you down to itself, your whole body, your heart too.

But he moved a trembling hand across his eyes, and looked at the placid crouching woman across the room. She was still as a statue. He felt ashamed and exhausted by the thought that he might, in one more moment, have tried by simple words and embraces to communicate some strange thing—something which seemed always to have just escaped him . . .

Sunlight touched the furthest pot on the hearth. It was late afternoon. This time tomorrow he would be somewhere on a good graveled road, driving his car past things that happened to people, quicker than their happening. Seeing ahead to the next day, he was glad, and knew that this was no time to embrace an old woman. He could feel in his pounding temples the readying of his blood for motion and for hurrying away.

"Sonny's hitched up your car by now," said the woman. "He'll git it out the ravine right shortly."

"Fine!" he cried with his customary enthusiasm.

Yet it seemed a long time that they waited. It began to get dark. Bowman was cramped in his chair. Any man should know enough to get up and walk around while he waited. There was something like guilt in such stillness and silence.

But instead of getting up, he listened. . . . His breathing restrained, his eyes powerless in the growing dark, he listened uneasily for a warning sound, forgetting in wariness what it would be. Before long he heard something—soft, continuous, insinuating.

"What's that noise?" he asked, his voice jumping into the dark.

Then wildly he was afraid it would be his heart beating so plainly in the quiet room, and she would tell him so.

"You might hear the stream," she said grudgingly.

Her voice was closer. She was standing by the table. He wondered why she did not light the lamp. She stood there in the dark and did not light it.

Bowman would never speak to her now, for the time was past. I'll sleep in the dark, he thought, in his bewilderment pitying himself.

Heavily she moved on to the window. Her arm, vaguely white, rose straight from her full side and she pointed out into the darkness.

"That white speck's Sonny," she said, talking to herself.

He turned unwillingly and peered over her shoulder; he hesitated to rise and stand beside her. His eyes searched the dusky air. The white speck floated smoothly toward her finger, like a leaf on a river, growing whiter in the dark. It was as if she had shown him something secret, part of her life, but had offered no explanation. He looked away. He was moved almost to tears, feeling for no reason that she had made a silent declaration equivalent to his own. His hand waited upon his chest.

Then a step shook the house, and Sonny was in the room. Bowman felt how the woman left him there and went to the other man's side.

"I done got your car out, mister," said Sonny's voice in the dark. "She's settin' a-waitin' in the road, turned to go back where she come from."

"Fine!" said Bowman, projecting his own voice to loudness. "I'm surely much obliged—I could never have done it myself—I was sick . . ."

"I could do it easy," said Sonny.

Bowman could feel them both waiting in the dark, and he could hear the dogs panting out in the yard, waiting to bark when he should go. He felt strangely helpless and resentful. Now that he could go, he longed to stay. From what was he being deprived? His chest was rudely shaken by the violence of his heart. These people cherished something here that he could not see, they withheld some ancient promise of food and warmth and light. Between them they had a conspiracy. He thought of the way she had moved away and from him and gone to Sonny, she had flowed toward him. He was shaking with cold, he was tired, and it was not fair. Humbly and yet angrily he stuck his hand into his pocket.

"Of course I'm going to pay you for everything—"

"We don't take money for such," said Sonny's voice belligerently.

"I want to pay. But do something more . . . Let me stay—to-night. . . ." He took another step toward them. If only they could see him, they would know his sincerity, his real need! His voice went on, "I'm not very strong yet, I'm not able to walk far, even back to

my car, maybe, I don't know—I don't know exactly where I am—”

He stopped. He felt as if he might burst into tears. What would they think of him!

Sonny came over and put his hands on him. Bowman felt them pass (they were professional too) across his chest, over his hips. He could feel Sonny's eyes upon him in the dark

“You ain't no revenuer come sneakin' here, mister, ain't got no gun?”

To this end of nowhere! And yet *he* had come. He made a grave answer. “No.”

“You can stay.”

“Sonny,” said the woman, “you'll have to borry some fire.”

“I'll go git it from Redmond's,” said Sonny.

“What?” Bowman strained to hear their words to each other.

“Our fire, it's out, and Sonny's got to borry some, because it's dark an' cold,” she said.

“But matches—I have matches—”

“We don't have no need for 'em,” she said proudly. “Sonny's goin' after his own fire.”

“I'm goin' to Redmond's,” said Sonny with an air of importance, and he went out.

After they had waited a while, Bowman looked out the window and saw a light moving over the hill. It spread itself out like a little fan. It zigzagged along the field, darting and swift, not like Sonny at all . . . Soon enough, Sonny staggered in, holding a burning stick behind him in tongs, fire flowing in his wake, blazing light into the corners of the room.

“We'll make a fire now,” the woman said, taking the brand.

When that was done she lit the lamp. It showed its dark and light. The whole room turned golden-yellow like some sort of flower, and the walls smelled of it and seemed to tremble with the quiet rushing of the fire and the waving of the burning lampwick in its funnel of light.

The woman moved among the iron pots. With the tongs she dropped hot coals on top of the iron lids. They made a set of soft vibrations, like the sound of a bell far away

She looked up and over at Bowman, but he could not answer. He was trembling. . . .

“Have a drink, mister?” Sonny asked. He had brought in a chair from the other room and sat astride it with his folded arms across the back. Now we are all visible to one another, Bowman thought, and cried, “Yes sir, you bet, thanks!”

“Come after me and do just what I do,” said Sonny.

It was another excursion into the dark. They went through the hall, out to the back of the house, past a shed and a hooded well. They came to a wilderness of thicket.

"Down on your knees," said Sonny.

"What?" Sweat broke out on his forehead.

He understood when Sonny began to crawl through a sort of tunnel that the bushes made over the ground. He followed, startled in spite of himself when a twig or a thorn touched him gently without making a sound, clinging to him and finally letting him go.

Sonny stopped crawling and, crouched on his knees, began to dig with both his hands into the dirt. Bowman shyly struck matches and made a light. In a few minutes Sonny pulled up a jug. He poured out some of the whiskey into a bottle from his coat pocket, and buried the jug again. "You never know who's liable to knock at your door," he said, and laughed. "Start back," he said, almost formally "Ain't no need for us to drink outdoors, like hogs."

At the table by the fire, sitting opposite each other in their chairs, Sonny and Bowman took drinks out of the bottle, passing it across. The dogs slept; one of them was having a dream.

"This is good," said Bowman. "This is what I needed." It was just as though he were drinking the fire off the hearth.

"He makes it," said the woman with quiet pride.

She was pushing the coals off the pots, and the smells of corn bread and coffee circled the room. She set everything on the table before the men, with a bone-handled knife stuck into one of the potatoes, splitting out its golden fiber. Then she stood for a minute looking at them, tall and full above them where they sat. She leaned a little toward them.

"You all can eat now," she said, and suddenly smiled.

Bowman had just happened to be looking at her. He set his cup back on the table in unbelieving protest. A pain pressed at his eyes. He saw that she was not an old woman. She was young, still young. He could think of no number of years for her. She was the same age as Sonny, and she belonged to him. She stood with the deep dark corner of the room behind her, the shifting yellow light scattering over her head and her gray formless dress, trembling over her tall body when it bent over them in its sudden communication. She was young. Her teeth were shining and her eyes glowed. She turned and walked slowly and heavily out of the room, and he heard her sit down on the cot and then lie down. The pattern on the quilt moved.

"She's goin' to have a baby," said Sonny, popping a bite into his mouth.

Bowman could not speak. He was shocked with knowing what was really in this house. A marriage, a fruitful marriage. That simple thing. Anyone could have had that.

Somehow he felt unable to be indignant or protest, although some sort of joke had certainly been played upon him. There was nothing remote or mysterious here—only something private. The only secret was the ancient communication between two people. But the memory of the woman's waiting silently by the cold hearth, of the man's stubborn journey a mile away to get fire, and how they finally brought out their food and drink and filled the room proudly with all they had to show, was suddenly too clear and too enormous within him for response. . . .

"You ain't as hungry as you look," said Sonny.

The woman came out of the bedroom as soon as the men had finished, and ate her supper while her husband stared peacefully into the fire

Then they put the dogs out, with the food that was left.

"I think I'd better sleep here by the fire, on the floor," said Bowman.

He felt that he had been cheated, and that he could afford now to be generous. Ill though he was, he was not going to ask them for their bed. He was through with asking favors in this house, now that he understood what was there.

"Sure, mister."

But he had not known yet how slowly he understood. They had not meant to give him their bed. After a little interval they both rose and looking at him gravely went into the other room.

He lay stretched by the fire until it grew low and dying. He watched every tongue of blaze lick out and vanish. "There will be special reduced prices on all footwear during the month of January," he found himself repeating quietly, and then he lay with his lips tight shut.

How many noises the night had! He heard the stream running, the fire dying, and he was sure now that he heard his heart beating, too, the sound it made under his ribs. He heard breathing, round and deep, of the man and his wife in the room across the passage. And that was all. But emotion swelled patiently within him, and he wished that the child were his.

He must get back to where he had been before. He stood weakly before the red coals and put on his overcoat. It felt too heavy on his shoulders. As he started out he looked and saw that the woman had never got through with cleaning the lamp. On some impulse he put all the money from his billfold under its fluted glass base, almost ostentatiously.

Ashamed, shrugging a little, and then shivering, he took his bags and went out. The cold of the air seemed to lift him bodily. The moon was in the sky.

On the slope he began to run, he could not help it. Just as he

reached the road, where his car seemed to sit in the moonlight like a boat, his heart began to give off tremendous explosions like a rifle, bang bang bang.

He sank in fright onto the road, his bags falling about him. He felt as if all this had happened before. He covered his heart with both hands to keep anyone from hearing the noise it made.

But nobody heard it.

# FLOWERING JUDAS

KATHERINE ANNE PORTER



Braggioni sits heaped upon the edge of a straight-backed chair much too small for him, and sings to Laura in a furry, mournful voice. Laura has begun to find reasons for avoiding her own house until the latest possible moment, for Braggioni is there almost every night. No matter how late she is, he will be sitting there with a surly waiting expression, pulling at his kinky yellow hair, thumbing the strings of his guitar, snarling a tune under his breath. Lupe the Indian maid meets Laura at the door, and says with a flicker of a glance towards the upper room, "He waits"

Laura wishes to lie down, she is tired of her hairpins and the feel of her long tight sleeves, but she says to him, "Have you a new song for me this evening?" If he says yes, she asks him to sing it. If he says no, she remembers his favorite one, and asks him to sing it again. Lupe brings her a cup of chocolate and a plate of rice, and Laura eats at the small table under the lamp, first inviting Braggioni, whose answer is always the same: "I have eaten, and besides, chocolate thickens the voice."

Laura says, "Sing, then," and Braggioni heaves himself into song. He scratches the guitar familiarly as though it were a pet animal, and sings passionately off key, taking the high notes in a prolonged painful squeal. Laura, who haunts the markets listening to the ballad singers, and stops every day to hear the blind boy playing his reed-flute in Sixteenth of September Street, listens to Braggioni with

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pitiless courtesy, because she dares not smile at his miserable performance. Nobody dares to smile at him. Braggioni is cruel to everyone, with a kind of specialized insolence, but he is so vain of his talents, and so sensitive to slights, it would require a cruelty and vanity greater than his own to lay a finger on the vast cureless wound of his self-esteem. It would require courage, too, for it is dangerous to offend him, and nobody has this courage.

Braggioni loves himself with such tenderness and amplitude and eternal charity that his followers—for he is a leader of men, a skilled revolutionist, and his skin has been punctured in honorable warfare—warm themselves in the reflected glow, and say to each other: "He has a real nobility, a love of humanity raised above mere personal affections." The excess of this self-love has flowed out, inconveniently for her, over Laura, who, with so many others, owes her comfortable situation and her salary to him. When he is in a very good humor, he tells her, "I am tempted to forgive you for being a *gringa*. *Grim-gita!*" and Laura, burning, imagines herself leaning forward suddenly, and with a sound back-handed slap wiping the suety smile from his face. If he notices her eyes at these moments he gives no sign.

She knows what Braggioni would offer her, and she must resist tenaciously without appearing to resist, and if she could avoid it she would not admit even to herself the slow drift of his intention. During these long evenings which have spoiled a long month for her, she sits in her deep chair with an open book on her knees, resting her eyes on the consoling rigidity of the printed page when the sight and sound of Braggioni singing threaten to identify themselves with all her remembered afflictions and to add their weight to her uneasy premonitions of the future. The gluttonous bulk of Braggioni has become a symbol of her many disillusiones, for a revolutionist should be lean, animated by heroic faith, a vessel of abstract virtues. This is nonsense, she knows it now and is ashamed of it. Revolution must have leaders, and leadership is a career for energetic men. She is, her comrades tell her, full of romantic error, for what she defines as cynicism in them is merely "a developed sense of reality." She is almost too willing to say, "I am wrong, I suppose I don't really understand the principles," and afterward she makes a secret truce with herself, determined not to surrender her will to such expedient logic. But she cannot help feeling that she has been betrayed irreparably by the disunion between her way of living and her feeling of what life should be, and at times she is almost contented to rest in this sense of grievance as a private store of consolation. Sometimes she wishes to run away, but she stays. Now she longs to fly out of this room, down the narrow stairs, and into the street where the houses lean together like conspirators under a single mottled lamp, and leave Braggioni singing to himself.

Instead she looks at Braggioni, frankly and clearly, like a good child who understands the rules of behavior. Her knees cling together under sound blue serge, and her round white collar is not purposely nun-like. She wears the uniform of an idea, and has renounced vanities. She was born Roman Catholic, and in spite of her fear of being seen by someone who might make a scandal of it, she slips now and again into some crumbling little church, kneels on the chilly stone, and says a Hail Mary on the gold rosary she bought in Tehuantepec. It is no good and she ends by examining the altar with its tinsel flowers and ragged brocades, and feels tender about the battered doll-shape of some male saint whose white, lace-trimmed drawers hang limply around his ankles below the hieratic dignity of his velvet robe. She has encased herself in a set of principles derived from her early training, leaving no detail of gesture or of personal taste untouched, and for this reason she will not wear lace made on machines. This is her private heresy, for in her special group the machine is sacred, and will be the salvation of the workers. She loves fine lace, and there is a tiny edge of fluted cobweb on this collar, which is one of twenty precisely alike, folded in blue tissue paper in the upper drawer of her clothes chest.

Braggioni catches her glance solidly as if he had been waiting for it, leans forward, balancing his paunch between his spread knees, and sings with tremendous emphasis, weighing his words. He has, the song relates, no father and no mother, nor even a friend to console him; lonely as a wave of the sea he comes and goes, lonely as a wave. His mouth opens round and yearns sideways, his balloon cheeks grow oily with the labor of song. He bulges marvelously in his expensive garments. Over his lavender collar, crushed upon a purple necktie, held by a diamond hoop: over his ammunition belt of tooled leather worked in silver, buckled cruelly around his gasping middle: over the tops of his glossy yellow shoes Braggioni swells with ominous ripeness, his mauve silk hose stretched taut, his ankles bound with the stout leather thongs of his shoes.

When he stretches his eyelids at Laura she notes again that his eyes are the true tawny yellow cat's eyes. He is rich, not in money, he tells her, but in power, and this power brings with it the blameless ownership of things, and the right to indulge his love of small luxuries. "I have a taste for the elegant refinements," he said once, flourishing a yellow silk handkerchief before her nose. "Smell that? It is Jockey Club, imported from New York." Nonetheless he is wounded by life. He will say so presently. "It is true everything turns to dust in the hand, to gall on the tongue." He sighs and his leather belt creaks like a saddle girth. "I am disappointed in everything as it comes. Everything." He shakes his head. "You, poor thing, you will be disappointed too. You are born for it. We are more alike than you realize

in some things. Wait and see. Some day you will remember what I have told you, you will know that Braggioni was your friend."

Laura feels a slow chill, a purely physical sense of danger, a warning in her blood that violence, mutilation, a shocking death, wait for her with lessening patience. She has translated this fear into something homely, immediate, and sometimes hesitates before crossing the street "My personal fate is nothing, except as the testimony of a mental attitude," she reminds herself, quoting from some forgotten philosophic primer, and is sensible enough to add, "Anyhow, I shall not be killed by an automobile if I can help it."

"It may be true I am as corrupt, in another way, as Braggioni," she thinks in spite of herself, "as callous, as incomplete," and if this is so, any kind of death seems preferable. Still she sits quietly, she does not run. Where could she go? Uninvited she has promised herself to this place, she can no longer imagine herself as living in another country, and there is no pleasure in remembering her life before she came here.

Precisely what is the nature of this devotion, its true motives, and what are its obligations? Laura cannot say. She spends part of her days in Xochimilco, near by, teaching Indian children to say in English, "The cat is on the mat." When she appears in the classroom they crowd her with smiles on their wise, innocent, clay-colored faces, crying, "Good morning, my titcher!" in immaculate voices, and they make of her desk a fresh garden of flowers every day.

During her leisure she goes to union meetings and listens to busy important voices quarreling over tactics, methods, internal politics. She visits the prisoners of her own political faith in their cells, where they entertain themselves with counting cockroaches, repenting of their indiscretions, composing their memoirs, writing out manifestoes and plans for their comrades who are still walking about free, hands in pockets, sniffing fresh air. Laura brings them food and cigarettes and a little money, and she brings messages disguised in equivocal phrases from the men outside who dare not set foot in the prison for fear of disappearing into the cells kept empty for them. If the prisoners confuse night and day, and complain, "Dear little Laura, time doesn't pass in this infernal hole, and I won't know when it is time to sleep unless I have a reminder," she brings them their favorite narcotics, and says in a tone that does not wound them with pity, "Tonight will really be night for you," and though her Spanish amuses them, they find her comforting, useful. If they lose patience and all faith, and curse the slowness of their friends in coming to their rescue with money and influence, they trust her not to repeat everything, and if she inquires, "Where do you think we can find money, or influence?" they are certain to answer, "Well, there is Braggioni, why doesn't he do something?"

She smuggles letters from headquarters to men hiding from firing squads in back streets in mildewed houses, where they sit in tumbled beds and talk bitterly as if all Mexico were at their heels, when Laura knows positively they might appear at the band concert in the Alameda on Sunday morning, and no one would notice them. But Braggioni says, "Let them sweat a little. The next time they may be careful. It is very restful to have them out of the way for a while." She is not afraid to knock on any door in any street after midnight, and enter in the darkness, and say to one of these men who is really in danger "They will be looking for you—seriously—tomorrow morning after six. Here is some money from Vicente. Go to Vera Cruz and wait."

She borrows money from the Roumanian agitator to give to his bitter enemy the Polish agitator. The favor of Braggioni is their disputed territory, and Braggioni holds the balance nicely, for he can use them both. The Polish agitator talks love to her over café tables, hoping to exploit what he believes is her secret sentimental preference for him, and he gives her misinformation which he begs her to repeat as the solemn truth to certain persons. The Roumanian is more adroit. He is generous with his money in all good causes, and lies to her with an air of ingenuous candor, as if he were her good friend and confidant. She never repeats anything they may say. Braggioni never asks questions. He has other ways to discover all that he wishes to know about them.

Nobody touches her, but all praise her gray eyes, and the soft, round under lip which promises gayety, yet is always grave, nearly always firmly closed; and they cannot understand why she is in Mexico. She walks back and forth on her errands, with puzzled eyebrows, carrying her little folder of drawings and music and school papers. No dancer dances more beautifully than Laura walks, and she inspires some amusing, unexpected ardors, which cause little gossip, because nothing comes of them. A young captain who had been a soldier in Zapata's army attempted, during a horseback ride near Cuernavaca, to express his desire for her with the noble simplicity befitting a rule folk-hero; but gently, because he was gentle. This gentleness was his defeat, for when he alighted, and removed her foot from the stirrup, and essayed to draw her down into his arms, her horse, ordinarily a tame one, shied fiercely, reared and plunged away. The young hero's horse careered blindly after his stable-mate, and the hero did not return to the hotel until rather late that evening. At breakfast he came to her table in full charro dress, gray buckskin jacket and trousers with strings of silver buttons down the leg, and he was in a humorous, careless mood. "May I sit with you?" and "You are a wonderful rider. I was terrified that you might be thrown

and dragged. I should never have forgiven myself. But I cannot admire you enough for your riding!"

"I learned to ride in Arizona," said Laura.

"If you will ride with me again this morning, I promise you a horse that will not shy with you," he said. But Laura remembered that she must return to Mexico City at noon.

Next morning the children made a celebration and spent their playtime writing on the blackboard, "We lov ar ticher," and with tinted chalks they drew wreaths of flowers around the words. The young hero wrote her a letter: "I am a very foolish, wasteful, impulsive man. I should have first said I love you, and then you would not have run away. But you shall see me again." Laura thought, "I must send him a box of colored crayons," but she was trying to forgive herself for having spurred her horse at the wrong moment.

A brown, shock-haired youth came and stood in her patio one night and sang like a lost soul for two hours, but Laura could think of nothing to do about it. The moonlight spread a wash of gauzy silver over the clear spaces of the garden, and the shadows were cobalt blue. The scarlet blossoms of the Judas tree were dull purple, and the names of the colors repeated themselves automatically in her mind, while she watched not the boy, but his shadow, fallen like a dark garment across the fountain rim, trailing in the water. Lupe came silently and whispered expert counsel in her ear. "If you will throw him one little flower, he will sing another song or two and go away." Laura threw the flower, and he sang a last song and went away with the flower tucked in the band of his hat. Lupe said, "He is one of the organizers of the Typographers Union, and before that he sold corridos in the Merced market, and before that, he came from Guanajuato, where I was born. I would not trust any man, but I trust least those from Guanajuato."

She did not tell Laura that he would be back again the next night, and the next, nor that he would follow her at a certain fixed distance around the Merced market, through the Zócolo, up Francisco I. Madero Avenue, and so along the Paseo de la Reforma to Chapultepec Park, and into the Philosopher's Footpath, still with that flower withering in his hat, and an indivisible attention in his eyes.

Now Laura is accustomed to him, it means nothing except that he is nineteen years old and is observing a convention with all propriety, as though it were founded on a law of nature, which in the end it might well prove to be. He is beginning to write poems which he prints on a wooden press, and he leaves them stuck like handbills in her door. She is pleasantly disturbed by the abstract, unhurried watchfulness of his black eyes which will in time turn easily towards

another object She tells herself that throwing the flower was a mistake, for she is twenty-two years old and knows better; but she refuses to regret it, and persuades herself that her negation of all external events as they occur is a sign that she is gradually perfecting herself in the stoicism she strives to cultivate against that disaster she fears, though she cannot name it.

She is not at home in the world Every day she teaches children who remain strangers to her, though she loves their tender round hands and their charming opportunist savagery. She knocks at unfamiliar doors not knowing whether a friend or a stranger shall answer, and even if a known face emerges from the sour gloom of that unknown interior, still it is the face of a stranger No matter what this stranger says to her, nor what her message to him, the very cells of her flesh reject knowledge and kinship in one monotonous word No. No No She draws her strength from this one holy talismanic word which does not suffer her to be led into evil Denying everything, she may walk anywhere in safety, she looks at everything without amazement

No, repeats this firm unchanging voice of her blood, and she looks at Braggioni without amazement He is a great man, he wishes to impress this simple girl who covers her great round breasts with thick dark cloth, and who hides long, invaluable beautiful legs under a heavy skirt She is almost thin except for the incomprehensible fullness of her breasts, like a nursing mother's, and Braggioni, who considers himself a judge of women, speculates again on the puzzle of her notorious virginity, and takes the liberty of speech which she permits without a sign of modesty, indeed, without any sort of sign, which is disconcerting.

"You think you are so cold, *gringita*! Wait and see You will surprise yourself some day! May I be there to advise you!" He stretches his eyelids at her, and his ill-humored cat's eyes waver in a separate glance for the two points of light marking the opposite ends of a smoothly drawn path between the swollen curve of her breasts. He is not put off by that blue serge, nor by her resolutely fixed gaze There is all the time in the world. His cheeks are bellying with the wind of song. "O girl with the dark eyes," he sings, and reconsiders "But yours are not dark. I can change all that O girl with the green eyes, you have stolen my heart away!" then his mind wanders to the song, and Laura feels the weight of his attention being shifted elsewhere. Singing thus, he seems harmless, he is quite harmless, there is nothing to do but sit patiently and say "No," when the moment comes She draws a full breath, and her mind wanders also, but not far. She dares not wander too far

Not for nothing has Braggioni taken pains to be a good revolutionist and a professional lover of humanity He will never die of

it. He has the malice, the cleverness, the wickedness, the sharpness of wit, the hardness of heart, stipulated for loving the world profitably. *He will never die of it.* He will live to see himself kicked out from his feeding trough by other hungry world-saviors. Traditionally he must sing in spite of his life which drives him to bloodshed, he tells Laura, for his father was a Tuscany peasant who drifted to Yucatan and married a Maya woman: a woman of race, an aristocrat. They gave him the love and knowledge of music, thus: and under the rip of his thumbnail, the strings of the instrument complain like exposed nerves.

Once he was called Delgadito by all the girls and married women who ran after him; he was so scrawny all his bones showed under his thin cotton clothing, and he could squeeze his emptiness to the very backbone with his two hands. He was a poet and the revolution was only a dream then; too many women loved him and sapped away his youth, and he could never find enough to eat anywhere, anywhere! Now he is a leader of men, crafty men who whisper in his ear, hungry men who wait for hours outside his office for a word with him, emaciated men with wild faces who waylay him at the street gate with a timid, "Comrade, let me tell you . . ." and they blow the foul breath from their empty stomachs in his face.

He is always sympathetic. He gives them handfuls of small coins from his own pocket, he promises them work, there will be demonstrations, they must join the unions and attend the meetings, above all they must be on the watch for spies. They are closer to him than his own brothers, without them he can do nothing—until tomorrow, comrade!

Until tomorrow. "They are stupid, they are lazy, they are treacherous, they would cut my throat for nothing," he says to Laura. He has good food and abundant drink, he hires an automobile and drives in the Paseo on Sunday morning, and enjoys plenty of sleep in a soft bed beside a wife who dares not disturb him; and he sits pampering his bones in easy billows of fat, singing to Laura, who knows and thinks these things about him. When he was fifteen, he tried to drown himself because he loved a girl, his first love, and she laughed at him. "A thousand women have paid for that," and his tight little mouth turns down at the corners. Now he perfumes his hair with Jockey Club, and confides to Laura: "One woman is really as good as another for me, in the dark. I prefer them all."

His wife organizes unions among the girls in the cigarette factories, and walks in picket lines, and even speaks at meetings in the evening. But she cannot be brought to acknowledge the benefits of true liberty. "I tell her I must have my freedom, net. She does not understand my point of view." Laura has heard this many times. Braggioni scratches the guitar and meditates. "She is an instinctively

virtuous woman, pure gold, no doubt of that. If she were not, I should lock her up, and she knows it."

His wife, who works so hard for the good of the factory girls, employs part of her leisure lying on the floor weeping because there are so many women in the world, and only one husband for her, and she never knows where nor when to look for him. He told her "Unless you can learn to cry when I am not here, I must go away for good." That day he went away and took a room at the Hotel Madrid.

It is this month of separation for the sake of higher principles that has been spoiled not only for Mrs Braggioni, whose sense of reality is beyond criticism, but for Laura, who feels herself bogged in a nightmare. Tonight Laura envies Mrs. Braggioni, who is alone, and free to weep as much as she pleases about a concrete wrong. Laura has just come from a visit to the prison, and she is waiting for tomorrow with a bitter anxiety as if tomorrow may not come, but time may be caught immovably in this hour, with herself transfixed, Braggioni singing on forever, and Eugenio's body not yet discovered by the guard.

Braggioni says "Are you going to sleep?" Almost before she can shake her head, he begins telling her about the May-day disturbances coming on in Morelia, for the Catholics hold a festival in honor of the Blessed Virgin, and the Socialists celebrate their martyrs on that day. "There will be two independent processions, starting from either end of town, and they will march until they meet, and the rest depends . . ." He asks her to oil and load his pistols. Standing up, he unbuckles his ammunition belt, and spreads it laden across her knees. Laura sits with the shells slipping through the cleaning cloth dipped in oil, and he says again he cannot understand why she works so hard for the revolutionary idea unless she loves some man who is in it. "Are you not in love with someone?" "No," says Laura. "And no one is in love with you?" "No." "Then it is your own fault. No woman need go begging. Why, what is the matter with you? The legless beggar woman in the Alameda has a perfectly faithful lover. Did you know that?"

Laura peers down the pistol barrel and says nothing, but a long, slow faintness rises and subsides in her, Braggioni curves his swollen fingers around the throat of the guitar and softly smothers the music out of it, and when she hears him again he seems to have forgotten her, and is speaking in the hypnotic voice he uses when talking in small rooms to a listening, close-gathered crowd. Someday this world, now seemingly so composed and eternal, to the edges of every sea shall be merely a tangle of gaping trenches, of crashing walls and broken bodies. Everything must be torn from its accustomed place where it has rotted for centuries, hurled skyward and



distributed, cast down again clean as rain, without separate identity. Nothing shall survive that the stiffened hands of poverty have created for the rich and no one shall be left alive except the elect spirits destined to procreate a new world cleansed of cruelty and injustice, ruled by benevolent anarchy. "Pistols are good, I love them, cannon are even better, but in the end I pin my faith to good dynamite," he concludes, and strokes the pistol lying in her hands. "Once I dreamed of destroying this city, in case it offered resistance to General Ortíz, but it fell into his hands like an overripe pear."

He is made restless by his own words, rises and stands waiting. Laura holds up the belt to him: "Put that on, and go kill somebody in Morelia, and you will be happier," she says softly. The presence of death in the room makes her bold. "Today, I found Eugenio going into a stupor. He refused to allow me to call the prison doctor. He had taken all the tablets I brought him yesterday. He said he took them because he was bored."

"He is a fool, and his death is his own business," says Braggioni fastening his belt carefully.

"I told him if he had waited only a little while longer, you would have got him set free," says Laura. "He said he did not want to wait."

"He is a fool and we are well rid of him," says Braggioni, reaching for his hat.

He goes away. Laura knows his mood has changed, she will not see him any more for a while. He will send word when he needs her to go on errands into strange streets, to speak to the strange faces that will appear, like clay masks with the power of human speech, to mutter their thanks to Braggioni for his help. Now she is free, and she thinks, I must run while there is time. But she does not go.

Braggioni enters his own house where for a month his wife has spent many hours every night weeping and tangling her hair upon her pillow. She is weeping now, and she weeps more at the sight of him, the cause of all her sorrows. He looks about the room. Nothing is changed, the smells are good and familiar, he is well acquainted with the woman who comes toward him with no reproach except grief on her face. He says to her tenderly. "You are so good, please don't cry any more, you dear good creature." She says, "Are you tired, my angel? Sit here and I will wash your feet." She brings a bowl of water, and kneeling, unlaces his shoes, and when from her knees she raises her sad eyes under her blackened lids, he is sorry for everything, and bursts into tears. "Ah, yes, I am hungry, I am tired, let us eat something together," he says, between sobs. His wife leans her head on his arm and says, "Forgive me!" and this time he is refreshed by the solemn, endless rain of her tears.

Laura takes off her serge dress and puts on a white linen night-

gown and goes to bed. She turns her head a little to one side, and lying still, reminds herself that it is time to sleep. Numbers tick in her brain like little clocks, soundless doors close of themselves around her. If you would sleep, you must not remember anything, the children will say tomorrow, good morning, my teacher, the poor prisoners who come every day bringing flowers to their jailor. 1-2-3-4-5—it is monstrous to confuse love with revolution, night with day, life with death—ah, Eugenio!

The tolling of the midnight bell is a signal, but what does it mean? Get up, Laura, and follow me. come out of your sleep, out of your bed, out of this strange house. What are you doing in this house? Without a word, without fear she rose and reached for Eugenio's hand, but he eluded her with a sharp, sly smile and drifted away. This is not all, you shall see—Murderer, he said, follow me, I will show you a new country, but it is far away and we must hurry. No, said Laura, not unless you take my hand, no; and she clung first to the stair rail, and then to the topmost branch of the Judas tree that bent down slowly and set her upon the earth, and then to the rocky ledge of a cliff, and then to the jagged wave of a sea that was not water but a desert of crumbling stone. Where are you taking me, she asked in wonder but without fear. To death, and it is a long way off, and we must hurry, said Eugenio. No, said Laura, not unless you take my hand. Then eat these flowers, poor prisoner, said Eugenio in a voice of pity, take and eat: and from the Judas tree he stripped the warm bleeding flowers, and held them to her lips. She saw that his hand was fleshless, a cluster of small white petrified branches, and his eye sockets were without light, but she ate the flowers greedily for they satisfied both hunger and thirst. Murderer! said Eugenio, and Cannibal! This is my body and my blood. Laura cried No! and at the sound of her own voice, she awoke trembling, and was afraid to sleep again.

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*P A R T X*

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**FICTION AND MYTH:  
THE ALLEGORICAL MODE**

In this final Part we shall concern ourselves with the domain of myth. It seems clear that the writer of fiction may emphasize whatever details, and whatever aspects of details, he wishes. Criteria of verifiability do not apply; if Pearl Harbor is attacked on December 7, 1941, by the Imperial Air Force of Japan, and if this corresponds to historical fact in some degree, this is of minor importance to an understanding of **From Here to Eternity**. We have seen, also, that fiction is not unique in its very slight allegiance to truth value, or verifiability: persuasive writing of all kinds suppresses in varying degrees and ways primary appeal to the hard facts as the scientist would understand them. Yet today's

science is tomorrow's mythology. As research turns up new evidence in the various disciplines, conceptual explanations also change. In this sense, the historian of science is much like the historian of literature.

Some critics believe that every story has some element of myth. Here, we need only think of the mythic element as that element of a story which markedly parallels the features and events of a narrative which itself is part of cultural myth. We need not quarrel about whether any given story in a culture can escape such parallelism. Our concern is with **emphasis**. The last two stories in our collection markedly emphasize, both in imagery and structure, concerns which may be called mythic, or allegorical. There were elements of this kind in preceding stories: "Flowering Judas," "The River" Even "Cyclists' Raid" has something in it of the godlike hero, confronting destruction and death, only to triumph over the world by his spiritual determination. Bleeker's suffering and reconciliation may distantly remind us of Christ's Passion; nevertheless, the similarity between story and myth is not **emphasized** in "Cyclists' Raid." In contrast, however, precisely that similarity is the primary thematic interest in "A Mother's Tale." Structurally, this short story is closely related to Pasolini's **The Gospel According to St. Matthew**.

The power of James Agee's "A Mother's Tale" depends partly on the author's handling of pathos. As in the stories by Tennessee Williams and Robert Coates in Part VII, so here the pain and isolation of a single character become occasions for empathy. We "feel" the pain of The One Who Came Back with special poignance because we have followed his tortured path in hunger, thirst, and fear. We see his identification with his fellows, his love; and we observe him loving the species, despite a smell he believes to be man's, which will try to destroy him. But a greater part of the emphasis in Agee's fable depends on the parallelism of events in the story to the understood sequence of events of Christian mythology.

One might argue that this story is more properly classed as social criticism: Agee is indicting man's cruelty to the animal kingdom, to which he turns for his food. Certainly an element of this exists in the story. But that splendid scene, that savage scene, after the animal has burst from its hook, as it runs down the "glowing floor of blood and down endless corridors which were hung with the bleeding carcasses of [his] kind," has something in it of the harrowing of hell. To us, as we read of the herd animal, separated now from his friends, struck on the head, flayed, hung upside down, then fleeing through a seemingly endless building, this is more than social criticism. The events following the animal's "return" from the dead, his appeal to his people to

these events imbue his entire journey, humiliation, death, and escape with a mythic dimension.

Of course, the message he brings is not the message of the Christian myth. Agee's hero preaches annihilation and loneliness. Thus, the fable element, or animal story, heightens Agee's mock Passion. The parallelism between the events of this and other stories allows us to speak of their mythic content.

Now let us look closely at Walter van Tilburg Clark's story, "The Indian Well." The opening paragraph sets the dramatic action of the story against a landscape of traditional contrasts between the desert or wilderness and the sheltered, watered garden spot: "The Indian Well alone, of lesser creations, was in constant revolt." The well is in revolt against death; it holds "a tiny front against the valley." But this is not all. On the wall of the cliff there remains a carved record of an ancient journey, "tokens of man's participation in the cycles of the well's resistance, each of which was an epitome of centuries, and perhaps of the wars of the universe." The figure of history as a series of cycles, then, is part of the underlying image pattern of the work.

Into this landscape comes Jim Suttler (note the obvious play on the word "settler") accompanied by his burro, Jenny. In measured paragraphs, Clark describes his hero: he looks like a conventional picture of Christ, we are told, but in other ways he is unlike him. Further, we note that Suttler is a deliberate person. He doesn't rush right into action, altering his environment. He reflects upon the setting. We notice also that, though he is thirsty, Suttler is slow to drink. As soon as he has settled into the valley, he begins to dig his mine. But he makes few changes in the landscape as a whole. When violence at first occurs, it has no important impact on either Suttler or the valley: the miner kills a calf who had shown signs of becoming a bull. Still, nothing much in the valley has changed.

Then comes the collision of Suttler and the hostile element in nature. By the time he discovers the body of his slain burro, nature, in the form of ants, has already taken steps to eliminate all trace of man and his culture. Suttler kills the younger coyote, but we sense that this is unsatisfactory revenge. He will get the cougar "if it takes a year." Now the patience Clark has done so much to build up takes on new meaning. Night after night throughout a hard winter, Suttler waits, alone. He sacrifices tobacco and other creature comforts to pursue his goal. No longer does he mine with any material end in view; and he is beginning to ail in body. Finally, though he kills the cougar, he cannot quite make nature accord with his design: the cat, against Suttler's will, manages a final drink from the well.

Suttler makes the cougar's pelt a part of his memorial to Jenny. But what does this mean? The story is not yet over. In a

revealing paragraph, Clark reminds his reader that exactly a year has passed; Suttler had come in the spring, and spring has returned. Again, though the reader might not have taken notice, as Sutter washes in the well, he repeats a "ritual" exactly as of a year before Suttler leaves the valley a happy man, and the animals return to their old ways soon after.

If we back off, now, to consider the pattern of the story, we see that Clark carries through certain of his visual images mentioned at the very beginning. The universe is in constant warfare, history moves in cycles spring, summer, autumn, winter, spring. As in the great religious rituals associated with the burgeoning of life following the hiatus of winter, Clark pictures spring in connection with the love of a female, first, a "plump girl in front of the blossoming rhododendrons," Jenny, second But in the time that has elapsed between springs a full year has run its round, and Suttler has entered into the travail of life with nature, which is metaphorically expressed by instinctive patterns of conflict and death His own life is laid on the line, and we see Suttler, the "civilized" man, vanishing, as he smokes and waits beneath the willows by the well.

Yet he returns to his humanity, and to new life, in the spring. Though this is not the main emphasis of the story, something of the religious vision operates in the contours of the scene and plot For Suttler, though unlike Christ in many ways, is much like Christ in others He undergoes temptation, he spends long days and nights in the wilderness, and he does so—not out of any instinctive need—but because of felt moral convictions which are stronger than any desire for bodily comfort Further, all alone Jim Suttler harrows hell; to him, there is something powerful and beautiful, but nonetheless frightening, in the cougar's attack on Jenny. He makes his act of revenge out of love for another creature And in this, like those people in the pictograph above the well, though much of what he does will be blotted out by time, Suttler remains human. He does change the world because he will not accept the natural order of things when it involves objects of his love. The point is not that he leaves some trace of Jenny's existence (for this would be a trivial, Forest Lawn notion of the meaning of Suttler's act), but Suttler's way of doing things: he acts, not only out of instinct and the desire to extend his wealth, but also with an element of ritual which distinguishes him from the other animals inhabiting this microcosm of the universe This moral dimension of Suttler's character is associated with his survival in the valley (and implicitly with the resurrection of Christ) Suttler's Easter is the return to spring and to the new life and productivity implied by his mating with the woman whose picture he carries. As Faulkner put it, man more than endures, he prevails.

We have, then, moved from descriptive to symbolic modes.

Man can use his language to tell what he sees, what he experiences or feels; and he can use language to articulate his deepest convictions about the meaning of human life. No careful student need be intimidated by any linguistic mode, whatever mode may be used: much of what we learn from a descriptive paragraph or a technical report depends on modes of language found in some measure in the most complex literary works. Thus we can understand why the assertion that "literature and symbolism and all such things are too abstract" is not a very meaningful one. It is impossible to make such clean-cut distinctions. The movement from Part to Part in this book should show us that terms like "fiction" and "non-fiction" are useful only so long as they do not hinder experience with language, or (worse) provide people with an excuse for their snobbery and/or their ignorance. The linguist has shown us that we all use the same grammar and the same lexicon, but that levels of use depend on social conditions. What this book has tried to show is that the criterion of appropriateness, which applies as well to writing as to apparel at a coronation, need not separate the humanist from the social scientist nor them from the physical scientist.

Though the physical scientist frequently uses representational forms of language (mathematics) to say exactly what he wants to, independent of the emotionally laden natural languages, the social scientist does not. The problem of jargon is not unique to literary critics. If humanists are going to talk to physicists, they will have to start doing so. Natural language is used by both scientist and humanist: to describe the world, to tell how one feels about it, to order a roast beef on rye with pickle. What has been wrong in the past is the notion that there are "higher" ends sought with one use of language than with the other. Language is language: a good technical report is better than a bad sonnet; a forthright and clear argument in favor of a given piece of legislation cannot be compared with a fine short story. Evaluating exposition and narrative writing involves more than intuition or good intentions. We must consider the audience, the possibilities of language, the overriding aim of a given communication, and the norms of good conduct in the community. For whom is the message intended? What possible means of expression are open to the writer? In every case, the doctrine of appropriateness applies; appropriateness may be perceived by both the author and the audience.





# A MOTHER'S TALE

JAMES AGEE



The calf ran up the little hill as fast as he could and stopped sharp. "Mama!" he cried, all out of breath. "What *is* it! What are they *doing*! Where are they *going*!"

Other spring calves came galloping too.

They all were looking up at her and awaiting her explanation, but she looked out over their excited eyes. As she watched the mysterious and majestic thing they had never seen before, her own eyes became even more than ordinarily still, and during the considerable moment before she answered, she scarcely heard their urgent questioning.

Far out along the autumn plain, beneath the sloping light, an immense drove of cattle moved eastward. They went at a walk, not very fast, but faster than they could imaginably enjoy. Those in front were compelled by those behind; those at the rear, with few exceptions, did their best to keep up; those who were locked within the herd could no more help moving than the particles inside a falling rock. Men on horses rode ahead, and alongside, and behind, or spurred their horses intensely back and forth, keeping the pace steady, and the herd in shape; and from man to man a dog sped back and forth incessantly as a shuttle, barking, incessantly, in a hysterical voice. Now and then one of the men shouted fiercely, and this like the shrieking of the dog was tinily audible above a low and awesome sound which seemed to come not from the multitude of hooves but from the

James Agee, from "A Mother's Tale," reprinted by special permission from the James Agee Trust. Reprinted from *Best American Short Stories of 1953*, ed. Martha Foley Houghton Mifflin Co. 1953. Appeared originally in *Harper's Bazaar*.

center of the world, and above the sporadic bawlings and bellowings of the herd.

From the hillside this tumult was so distant that it only made more delicate the prodigious silence in which the earth and sky were held; and, from the hill, the sight was as modest as its sound. The herd was virtually hidden in the dust it raised, and could be known, in general, only by the horns which pricked this flat sunlit dust like little briars. In one place a twist of the air revealed the trembling fabric of many backs; but it was only along the near edge of the mass that individual animals were discernible, small in a driven frieze, walking fast, stumbling and recovering, tossing their armed heads, or opening their skulls heavenward in one of those cries which reached the hillside long after the jaws were shut.

From where she watched, the mother could not be sure whether there were any she recognized. She knew that among them there must be a son of hers; she had not seen him since some previous spring, and she would not be seeing him again. Then the cries of the young ones impinged on her bemusement: "Where are they going?"

She looked into their ignorant eyes.

"Away," she said.

"Where?" they cried. "Where? Where?" her own son cried again.

She wondered what to say.

"On a long journey."

"But where *to*?" they shouted. "Yes, where *to*?" her son exclaimed, and she could see that he was losing his patience with her, as he always did when he felt she was evasive.

"I'm not sure," she said.

Their silence was so cold that she was unable to avoid their eyes for long.

"Well, not *really* sure. Because, you see," she said in her most reasonable tone, "I've never seen it with my own eyes, and that's the only way to *be* sure; *isn't* it."

They just kept looking at her. She could see no way out.

"But I've *heard* about it," she said with shallow cheerfulness, "from those who *have* seen it, and I don't suppose there's any good reason to doubt them."

She looked away over them again, and for all their interest in what she was about to tell them, her eyes so changed that they turned and looked too.

The herd, which had been moving broadside to them, was being turned away, so slowly that like the turning of stars it could not quite be seen from one moment to the next; yet soon it was moving directly away from them, and even during the little while she spoke and they all watched after it, it steadily and very noticeably diminished, and the sounds of it as well.

"It happens always about this time of year," she said quietly while they watched "Nearly all the men and horses leave, and go into the North and the West"

"Out on the range," her son said, and by his voice she knew what enchantment the idea already held for him.

"Yes," she said, "out on the range." And trying, impossibly, to imagine the range, they were touched by the breath of grandeur.

"And then before long," she continued, "everyone has been found, and brought into one place; and then . . . what you see, happens. All of them.

"Sometimes when the wind is right," she said more quietly, "you can hear them coming long before you can see them. It isn't even like a sound, at first. It's more as if something were moving far under the ground. It makes you uneasy. You wonder, why, what in the world can *that* be! Then you remember what it is and then you can really hear it. And then finally, there they all are"

She could see this did not interest them at all.

"But where are they *going*?" one asked, a little impatiently

"I'm coming to that," she said; and she let them wait. Then she spoke slowly but casually.

"They are on their way to a railroad"

There, she thought, that's for that look you all gave me when I said I wasn't sure. She waited for them to ask; they waited for her to explain

"A railroad," she told them, "is great hard bars of metal lying side by side, or so they tell me, and they go on and on over the ground as far as the eye can see. And great wagons run on the metal bars on wheels, like wagon wheels but smaller, and these wheels are made of solid metal too. The wagons are much bigger than any wagon you've ever seen, as big as, big as sheds, they say, and they are pulled along on the iron bars by a terrible huge dark machine, with a loud scream."

"Big as *sheds*?" one of the calves said skeptically.

"Big *enough*, any way," the mother said "I told you I've never seen it myself. But those wagons are so big that several of us can get inside at once. And that's exactly what happens."

Suddenly she became very quiet, for she felt that somehow, she could not imagine just how, she had said altogether too much.

"Well, *what* happens," her son wanted to know. "What do you mean, *happens*."

She always tried hard to be a reasonably modern mother. It was probably better, she felt, to go on, than to leave them all full of imaginings and mystification. Besides, there was really nothing at all awful about what happened . . . if only one could know *why*.

"Well," she said, "it's nothing much, really. They just—why, when they all finally *get* there, why there are all the great cars

waiting in a long line, and the big dark machine is up ahead . . . smoke comes out of it, they say . . . and . . . well, then, they just put us into the wagons, just as many as will fit in each wagon, and when everybody is in, why . . ." She hesitated, for again, though she couldn't be sure why, she was uneasy.

"Why, then," her son said, "the train takes them away."

Hearing that word, she felt a flinching of the heart. Where had he picked it up she wondered, and she gave him a shy and curious glance. Oh dear, she thought. I should never have even *begun* to explain. "Yes," she said, "when everybody is safely in, they slide the doors shut"

They were all silent for a little while. Then one of them asked thoughtfully, "Are they taking them somewhere they don't want to go?"

"Oh, I don't think so," the mother said. "I imagine it's very nice."

"I want to go," she heard her son say with ardor. "I want to go right now," he cried. "Can I, Mama? *Can I? Please?*" And looking into his eyes, she was overwhelmed by sadness.

"Silly thing," she said, "there'll be time enough for that when you're grown up. But what I very much hope," she went on, "is that instead of being chosen to go out on the range and to make the long journey, you will grow up to be very strong and bright so they will decide that you may stay here at home with Mother. And you, too," she added, speaking to the other little males, but she could not honestly wish this for any but her own, least of all for the eldest, strongest and most proud, for she knew how few are chosen

She could see that what she said was not received with enthusiasm

"But I want to go," her son said.

"Why?" she asked "I don't think any of you realize that it's a great *honor* to be chosen to stay. A great privilege. Why, it's just the most ordinary ones are taken out onto the range. But only the very pick are chosen to stay here at home. If you want to go out on the range," she said in hurried and happy inspiration, "all you have to do is be ordinary and careless and silly. If you want to have even a chance to be chosen to stay, you have to try to be stronger and bigger and braver and brighter than anyone else, and that takes *hard work. Every day*. Do you see?" And she looked happily and hopefully from one to another "Besides," she added, aware that they were not won over, "I'm told it's a very rough life out there, and the men are unkind.

"Don't you see," she said again; and she pretended to speak to all of them, but it was only to her son.

But he only looked at her. "Why do you want me to stay home?" he asked flatly; in their silence she knew the others were asking the same question.

"Because it's safe here," she said before she knew better; and realized she had put it in the most unfortunate way possible "Not safe, not just that," she fumbled. "I mean . . . because here we *know* what happens, and what's going to happen, and there's never any doubt about it, never any reason to wonder, to worry. Don't you see? It's just *Home*," and she put a smile on the word, "where we all know each other and are happy and well."

They were so merely quiet, looking back at her, that she felt they were neither won over nor alienated. Then she knew of her son that he, anyhow, was most certainly not persuaded, for he asked the question she most dreaded "Where do they go on the train?" And hearing him, she knew that she would stop at nothing to bring that curiosity and eagerness, and that tendency toward skepticism, within safe bounds.

"Nobody knows," she said, and she added, in just the tone she knew would most sharply engage them, "Not for sure, anyway."

"What do you mean, *not for sure*," her son cried. And the oldest, biggest calf repeated the question, his voice cracking.

The mother deliberately kept silence as she gazed out over the plain, and while she was silent they all heard the last they would ever hear of all those who were going away. One last great cry, as faint almost as a breath, the infinitesimal jabbing vituperation of the dog; the solemn muttering of the earth.

"Well," she said, after even this sound was entirely lost, "there was one who came back." Their instant, trustful eyes were too much for her. She added, "Or so they say."

They gathered a little more closely around her, for now she spoke very quietly.

"It was my great-grandmother who told me," she said. "She was told it by *her* great-grandmother, who claimed she saw it with her own eyes, though of course I can't vouch for that. Because of course I wasn't even dreamed of then; and Great-grandmother was so very, very old, you see, that you couldn't always be sure she knew quite *what* she was saying."

Now that she began to remember it more clearly, she was sorry she had committed herself to telling it.

"Yes," she said, "the story is, there was one, *just* one, who ever came back, and he told what happened on the train, and where the train went and what happened after. He told it all in a rush, they say, the last things first and every which way, but as it was finally sorted out and gotten into order by those who heard it and those they told it to, this is more or less what happened:

"He said that after the men had gotten just as many of us as they could into the car he was in, so that their sides pressed tightly together and nobody could lie down, they slid the door shut with a startling rattle and a bang, and then there was a sudden jerk, so strong they

might have fallen except that they were packed so closely together, and the car began to move. But after it had moved only a little way, it stopped as suddenly as it had started, so that they all nearly fell down again. You see, they were just moving up the next car that was joined on behind, to put more of us into it. He could see it all between the boards of the car, because the boards were built a little apart from each other, to let in air."

Car, her son said again to himself, now he would never forget the word

"He said that then, for the first time in his life, he became very badly frightened, he didn't know why. But he was sure, at that moment, that there was something dreadfully to be afraid of. The others felt this same great fear. They called out loudly to those who were being put into the car behind, and the others called back, but it was no use, those who were getting aboard were between narrow white fences and then were walking up a narrow slope and the men kept jabbing them as they do when they are in an unkind humor, and there was no way to go but on into the car. There was no way to get out of the car, either. He tried, with all his might, and he was the one nearest the door.

"After the next car behind was full, and the door was shut, the train jerked forward again, and stopped again, and they put more of us into still another car, and so on, and on, until all the starting and stopping no longer frightened anybody; it was just something uncomfortable that was never going to stop, and they began instead to realize how hungry and thirsty they were. But there was no food and no water, so they just had to put up with this; and about the time they became resigned to going without their suppers (for by now it was almost dark), they heard a sudden and terrible scream which frightened them even more deeply than anything had frightened them before, and the train began to move again, and they braced their legs once more for the jolt when it would stop, but this time, instead of stopping, it began to go fast, and then even faster, so fast that the ground nearby slid past like a flooded creek and the whole country, he claimed, began to move too, turning slowly around a far mountain as if it were all one great wheel. And then there was a strange kind of disturbance inside the car, he said, or even inside his very bones. He felt as if everything in him was *falling*, as if he had been filled full of a heavy liquid that all wanted to flow one way, and all the others were leaning as he was leaning, away from this queer heaviness that was trying to pull them over, and then just as suddenly this leaning heaviness was gone and they nearly fell again before they could stop leaning against it. He could never understand what this was, but it too happened so many times that they all got used to it, just as they got used to seeing the country turn like a slow wheel, and just as they got used to the long

cruel screams of the engine, and the steady iron noise beneath them which made the cold darkness so fearsome, and the hunger and the thirst and the continual standing up, and the moving on and on and on as if they would never stop."

"*Didn't* they ever stop?" one asked.

"Once in a great while," she replied. "Each time they did," she said, "he thought, Oh, now *at last!* *At last* we can get out and stretch our tired legs and lie down! *At last* we'll be given food and water! But they never let them out. And they never gave them food or water. They never even cleaned up under them. They had to stand in their manure and in the water they made"

"Why did the train stop?" her son asked, and with somber gratification she saw that he was taking all this very much to heart.

"He could never understand why," she said. "Sometimes men would walk up and down alongside the cars, and the more nervous and the more trustful of us would call out, but they were only looking around, they never seemed to do anything. Sometimes he could see many houses and bigger buildings together where people lived. Sometimes it was far out in the country and after they had stood still for a long time they would hear a little noise which quickly became louder, and then became suddenly a noise so loud it stopped their breathing, and during this noise something black would go by, very close, and so fast it couldn't be seen. And then it was gone as suddenly as it had appeared, and the noise became small, and then in the silence their train would start up again.

"Once, he tells us, something very strange happened. They were standing still, and cars of a very different kind began to move slowly past. These cars were not red, but black, with many glass windows like those in a house; and he says they were as full of human beings as the car he was in was full of our kind. And one of these people looked into his eyes and smiled, as if he liked him, or as if he knew only too well how hard the journey was.

"So by his account it happens to them, too," she said, with a certain pleased vindictiveness. "Only they were sitting down at their ease, not standing. And the one who smiled was eating."

She was still, trying to think of something; she couldn't quite grasp the thought.

"But didn't they *ever* let them out?" her son asked.

The oldest calf jeered. "Of *course* they did. He came back, didn't he? How could he ever come back if he didn't get out?"

"They didn't let them out," she said, "for a long, long time."

"How long?"

"So long, and he was so tired, he could never quite be sure. But he said that it turned from night to day from day to night and back again several times over, with the train moving nearly all of

this time, and that when it finally stopped, early one morning, they were all so tired and discouraged that they hardly even noticed any longer, let alone felt any hope that anything would change for them, ever again; and then all of a sudden men came up and put up a wide walk and unbarred the door and slid it open, and it was the most wonderful and happy moment of his life when he saw the door open, and walked into the open air with all his joints trembling, and drank the water and ate the delicious food they had ready for him; it was worth the whole terrible journey."

Now that these scenes came clear before her, there was a faraway shining in her eyes, and her voice, too, had something in it of the faraway

"When they had eaten and drunk all they could hold they lifted up their heads and looked around, and everything they saw made them happy. Even the trains made them cheerful now, for now they were no longer afraid of them. And though these trains were forever breaking to pieces and joining again with other broken pieces, with shufflings and clashings and rude cries, they hardly paid them attention any more, they were so pleased to be in their new home, and so surprised and delighted to find they were among thousands upon thousands of strangers of their own kind, all lifting up their voices in peacefulness and thanksgiving, and they were so wonderstruck by all they could see, it was so beautiful and so grand

"For he has told us that now they lived among fences as white as bone, so many, and so spiderishly complicated, and shining so pure, that there's no use trying even to hint at the beauty and the splendor of it to anyone who knows only the pitiful little outfittings of a ranch. Beyond these mazy fences, through the dark and bright smoke which continually turned along the sunlight, dark buildings stood shoulder to shoulder in a wall as huge and proud as mountains. All through the air, all the time, there was an iron humming like the humming of the iron bar after it has been struck to tell the men it is time to eat, and in all the air, all the time, there was that same strange kind of iron strength which makes the silence before lightning so different from all other silence

"Once for a little while the wind shifted and blew over them straight from the great buildings, and it brought a strange and very powerful smell which confused and disturbed them. He could never quite describe this smell, but he has told us it was unlike anything he had ever known before. It smelled like old fire, he said, and old blood and fear and darkness and sorrow and most terrible and brutal force and something else, something in it that made him want to run away. This sudden uneasiness and this wish to run swept through every one of them, he tells us, so that they were all moved at once as restlessly



as so many leaves in a wind, and there was great worry in their voices. But soon the leaders among them concluded that it was simply the way men must smell when there are a great many of them living together. Those dark buildings must be crowded very full of men, they decided, probably as many thousands of them, indoors, as there were of us, outdoors, so it was no wonder their smell was so strong and, to our kind, so unpleasant. Besides, it was so clear now in every other way that men were not as we had always supposed, but were doing everything they knew how to make us comfortable and happy, that we ought to just put up with their smell, which after all they couldn't help, any more than we could help our own. Very likely men didn't like the way we smelled, any more than we liked theirs. They passed along these ideas to the others, and soon everyone felt more calm, and then the wind changed again, and the fierce smell no longer came to them, and the smell of their own kind was back again, very strong of course, in such a crowd, but ever so homey and comforting, and everyone felt easy again.

"They were fed and watered so generously, and treated so well, and the majesty and the loveliness of this place where they had all come to rest was far beyond anything they had ever known or dreamed of, that many of the simple and ignorant, whose memories were short, began to wonder whether that whole difficult journey, or even their whole lives up to now, had ever really been. Hadn't it all been just shadows, they murmured, just a bad dream?"

"Even the sharp ones, who knew very well it had all really happened, began to figure that everything up to now had been made so full of pain only so that all they had come to now might seem all the sweeter and the more glorious. Some of the oldest and deepest were even of a mind that all the puzzle and tribulation of the journey had been sent us as a kind of harsh trying or proving of our worthiness; and that it was entirely fitting and proper that we could earn our way through to such rewards as these, only through suffering, and through being patient under pain which was beyond our understanding; and that now at the last, to those who had borne all things well, all things were made known for the mystery of suffering stood revealed in joy. And now as they looked back over all that was past, all their sorrows and bewilderments seemed so little and so fleeting that, from the simplest among them even to the most wise, they could feel only the kind of amused pity we feel toward the very young when, with the first thing that hurts them or they are forbidden, they are sure there is nothing kind or fair in all creation, and carry on accordingly, raving and grieving as if their hearts would break."

She glanced among them with an indulgent smile, hoping the little lesson would sink home. They seemed interested but somewhat dazed.

I'm talking way over their heads, she realized. But by now she herself was too deeply absorbed in her story to modify it much. *Let* it be, she thought, a little impatient; it's over *my* head, for that matter.

"They had hardly before this even wondered that they were alive," she went on, "and now all of a sudden they felt they understood *why* they were. This made them very happy, but they were still only beginning to enjoy this new wisdom when quite a new and different kind of restiveness ran among them. Before they quite knew it they were all moving once again, and now they realized that they were being moved, once more, by men, toward still some other place and purpose they could not know. But during these last hours they had been so well that now they felt no uneasiness, but all moved forward calm and sure toward better things still to come; he has told us that he no longer felt as if he were being driven, even as it became clear that they were going toward the shade of those great buildings, but guided.

"He was guided between fences which stood even more and more narrowly near each other, among companions who were pressed ever more and more closely against one another; and now as he felt their warmth against him it was not uncomfortable, and his pleasure in it was not through any need to be close among others through anxiousness, but was a new kind of strong and gentle delight, at being so very close, so deeply of his own kind, that it seemed as if the very breath and heartbeat of each one were being exchanged through all that multitude, and each was another, and others were each, and each was a multitude, and the multitude was one. And quieted and made mild within this melting, they now entered the cold shadow cast by the buildings, and now with every step the smell of the buildings grew stronger, and in the darkening air the glittering of the fences was ever more queer.

"And now as they were pressed ever more intimately together he could see ahead of him a narrow gate, and he was strongly pressed upon from either side and from behind, and went in eagerly, and now he was between two fences so narrowly set that he brushed either fence with either flank, and walked alone, seeing just one other ahead of him, and knowing of just one other behind him, and for a moment the strange thought came to him, that the one ahead was his father, and that the one behind was the son he had never begotten.

"And now the light was so changed that he knew he must have come inside one of the gloomy and enormous buildings, and the smell was so much stronger that it seemed almost to burn his nostrils, and the smell and the somber new light blended together and became some other thing again, beyond his describing to us except to say that the whole air beat with it like one immense heart and it was as if the beating of his heart were pure violence infinitely manifolded upon violence so that the uneasy feeling stirred in him again that it would be wise to

turn around and run out of this place just as fast and as far as ever he could go. This he heard, as if he were telling it to himself at the top of his voice, but it came from somewhere so deep and so dark inside him that he could only hear the shouting of it as less than a whisper, as just a hot and chilling breath, and he scarcely heeded it, there was so much else to attend to.

"For as he walked along in this sudden and complete loneliness, he tells us, this wonderful knowledge of being one with all his race meant less and less to him, and in its place came something still more wonderful he knew what it was to be himself alone, a creature separate and different from any other, who had never been before, and would never be again. He could feel this in his whole weight as he walked, and in each foot as he put it down and gave his weight to it and moved above it, and in every muscle as he moved, and it was a pride which lifted him up and made him feel large, and a pleasure which pierced him through. And as he began with such wondering delight to be aware of his own exact singleness in this world, he also began to understand (or so he thought) just why these fences were set so very narrow, and just why he was walking all by himself. It stole over him, he tells us, like the feeling of a slow cold wind, that he was being guided toward some still more wonderful reward or revealing, up ahead, which he could not of course imagine, but he was sure it was being held in store for him alone.

"Just then the one ahead of him fell down with a great sigh, and was so quickly taken out of the way that he did not even have to shift the order of his hooves as he walked on. The sudden fall and the sound of that sigh dismayed him, though, and something within him told him that it would be wise to look up, and there he saw Him.

"A little bridge ran crosswise above the fences. He stood on this bridge with His feet as wide apart as He could set them. He wore spattered trousers but from the belt up He was naked and as wet as rain. Both arms were raised high above His head and in both hands He held an enormous Hammer. With a grunt which was hardly like the voice of a human being, and with all His strength, He brought this Hammer down into the forehead of our friend, who, in a blinding blazing, heard from his own mouth the beginning of a gasping sigh; then there was only darkness."

Oh, this is *enough*! it's *enough*! she cried out within herself, seeing their terrible young eyes. How *could* she have been so foolish as to tell so much!

"What happened then?" she heard, in the voice of the oldest calf, and she was horrified. This shining in their eyes. was it only excitement? no pity? no fear?

"What happened?" two others asked.

Very well, she said to herself. I've gone so far, now I'll go the rest

of the way. She decided not to soften it, either. She'd teach them a lesson they wouldn't forget in a hurry.

"Very well," she was surprised to hear herself say aloud.

"How long he lay in this darkness he couldn't know, but when he began to come out of it, all he knew was the most unspeakably dreadful pain. He was upside down and very slowly swinging and turning, for he was hanging by the tendons of his heels from great frightful hooks, and he has told us that the feeling was as if his hide were being torn from him inch by inch, in one piece. And then as he became more clearly aware he found that this was exactly what was happening. Knives would sliver and slice along both flanks, between the hide and the living flesh, then there was a moment of most precious relief; then red hands seized his hide and there was a jerking of the hide and a tearing of tissue which it was almost as terrible to hear as to feel, turning his whole body and the poor head at the bottom of it; and then the knives again.

"It was so far beyond anything he had ever known unnatural and amazing that he hung there through several more such slicings and jerkings and tearings before he was fully able to take it all in then, with a scream, and a supreme straining of all his strength, he tore himself from the hooks and collapsed sprawling to the floor and, scrambling right to his feet, charged the men with the knives. For just a moment they were so astonished and so terrified they could not move. Then they moved faster than he had ever known men could—and so did all the other men who chanced to be in his way. He ran down a glowing floor of blood and down endless corridors which were hung with the bleeding carcasses of our kind and with bleeding fragments of carcasses, among blood-clothed men who carried bleeding weapons, and out of that vast room into the open, and over and through one fence after another, shoving aside many an astounded stranger and shouting out warnings as he ran, and away up the railroad toward the West.

"How he ever managed to get away, and how he ever found his way home, we can only try to guess. It's told that he scarcely knew, himself, by the time he came to this part of his story. He was impatient with those who interrupted him to ask about that, he had so much more important things to tell them and by then he was so exhausted and so far gone that he could say nothing very clear about the little he did know. But we can realize that he must have had really tremendous strength, otherwise he couldn't have outlived the Hammer; and that strength such as his—which we simply don't see these days, it's of the olden time—is capable of things our own strongest and bravest would sicken to dream of. But there was something even stronger than his strength. There was his righteous fury, which nothing could stand up against, which brought him out of that fearful

place. And there was his high and burning and heroic purpose, to keep him safe along the way, and to guide him home, and to keep the breath of life in him until he could warn us. He did manage to tell us that he just followed the railroad, but how he chose one among the many which branched out from that place, he couldn't say. He told us, too, that from time to time he recognized shapes of mountains and other landmarks, from his journey by train, all reappearing backward and with a changed look and hard to see, too (for he was shrewd enough to travel mostly at night), but still recognizable. But that isn't enough to account for it. For he has told us, too, that he simply *knew* the way; that he didn't hesitate one moment in choosing the right line of railroad, or even think of it as choosing; and that the landmarks didn't really guide him, but just made him the more sure of what he was already sure of; and that whenever he *did* encounter human beings—and during the later stages of his journey, when he began to doubt he would live to tell us, he traveled day and night—they never so much as moved to make him trouble, but stopped dead in their tracks, and their jaws fell open.

"And surely we can't wonder that their jaws fell open. I'm sure yours would, if you had seen him as he arrived, and I'm very glad I wasn't there to see it, either, even though it is said to be the greatest and most momentous day of all the days that ever were or shall be. For we have the testimony of eyewitnesses, how he looked, and it is only too vivid, even to hear of. He came up out of the East as much staggering as galloping (for by now he was so worn out by pain and exertion and loss of blood that he could hardly stay upright), and his heels were so piteously torn by the hooks that his hooves doubled under more often than not, and in his broken forehead the mark of the Hammer was like the socket for a third eye.

"He came to the meadow where the great trees made shade over the water. 'Bring them all together!' he cried out, as soon as he could find breath 'All!' Then he drank; and then he began to speak to those who were already there: for as soon as he saw himself in the water it was as clear to him as it was to those who watched him that there was no time left to send for the others. His hide was all gone from his head and his neck and his forelegs and his chest and most of one side and a part of the other side. It was flung backward from his naked muscles by the wind of his running and now it lay around him in the dust like a ragged garment. They say there is no imagining how terrible and in some way how grand the eyeball is when the skin has been taken entirely from around it: his eyes, which were bare in this way, also burned with pain, and with the final energies of his life, and with his desperate concern to warn us while he could; and he rolled his eyes wildly while he talked, or looked piercingly from one to another of the listeners, interrupting himself to cry out, 'Believe me!

Oh, *believe* me!’ For it had evidently never occurred to him that he might not be believed, and must make this last great effort, in addition to all he had gone through for us, to *make* himself believed; so that he groaned with sorrow and with rage and railed at them without tact or mercy for their slowness to believe. He had scarcely what you could call a voice left, but with this relic of a voice he shouted and bellowed and bullied us and insulted us, in the agony of his concern. While he talked he bled from the mouth, and the mingled blood and saliva hung from his chin like the beard of a goat

“Some say that with his naked face, and his savage eyes, and that beard and the hide lying off his bare shoulders like shabby clothing, he looked almost human. But others feel this is an irreverence even to think, and others, that it is a poor compliment to pay the one who told us, at such cost to himself, the true ultimate purpose of Man. Some did not believe he had ever come from our ranch in the first place, and of course he was so different from us in appearance and even in his voice, and so changed from what he might ever have looked or sounded like before, that nobody could recognize him for sure, though some were sure they did. Others suspected that he had been sent among us with his story for some mischievous and cruel purpose, and the fact that they could not imagine what this purpose might be, made them, naturally, all the more suspicious. Some believed he was actually a man, trying—and none too successfully, they said—to disguise himself as one of us, and again the fact that they could not imagine why a man would do this, made them all the more uneasy. There were quite a few who doubted that anyone who could get into such bad condition as he was in, was fit even to give reliable information, let alone advice, to those in good health. And some whispered, even while he spoke, that he had turned lunatic, and many came to believe this. It wasn’t only that his story was so fantastic; there was good reason to wonder, many felt, whether anybody in his right mind would go to such trouble for others. But even those who did not believe him listened intently, out of curiosity to hear so wild a tale, and out of the respect it is only proper to show any creature who is in the last agony.

“What he told, was what I have just told you. But his purpose was away beyond just the telling. When they asked questions, no matter how curious or suspicious or idle or foolish, he learned, toward the last, to answer them with all the patience he could and in all the detail he could remember. He even invited them to examine his wounded heels and the pulsing wound in his head as closely as they pleased. He even begged them to, for he knew that before everything else, he must be believed. For unless we could believe him, wherever could we find any reason, or enough courage, to do the hard and dreadful things he told us we must do!

"It was only these things, he cared about. Only for these, he came back."

Now clearly remembering what these things were, she felt her whole being quail. She looked at the young ones quickly and as quickly looked away.

"While he talked," she went on, "and our ancestors listened, men came quietly among us, one of them shot him. Whether he was shot in kindness or to silence him is an endlessly disputed question which will probably never be settled. Whether, even, he died of the shot, or through his own great pain and weariness (for his eyes, they say, were glazing for some time before the men came), we will never be sure. Some suppose even that he may have died of his sorrow and his concern for us. Others feel that he had quite enough to die of, without that. All these things are tangled and lost in the disputes of those who love to theorize and to argue. There is no arguing about his dying words, though, they were very clearly remembered."

"*'Tell them! Believe!'*"

After a while her son asked, "What did he tell them to do?"

She avoided his eyes. "There's a great deal of disagreement about that, too," she said after a moment. "You see, he was so very tired." They were silent.

"So tired," she said, "some think that toward the end, he really *must* have been out of his mind."

"Why?" asked her son.

"Because he was so tired out and so badly hurt."

They looked at her mistrustfully.

"And because of what he told us to do."

"What did he tell us to do?" her son asked again.

Her throat felt dry. "Just . . . things you can hardly bear even to think of. That's all."

They waited. "Well, *what?*" her son asked in a cold, accusing voice.

"*'Each one is himself,'*" she said shyly. "*'Not of the herd. Himself alone.'* That's one."

"What else?"

"*'Obey nobody. Depend on none.'*"

"What else?"

She found that she was moved. "*'Break down the fences,'*" she said less shyly. "*'Tell everybody, everywhere.'*"

"Where?"

"Everywhere. You see, he thought there must be ever so many more of us than we had ever known."

They were silent. "What else?" her son asked.

"*'For if even a few do not hear me, or disbelieve me, we are all betrayed.'*"

"Betrayed?"

"He meant, doing as men want us to. Not for ourselves, or the good of each other."

They were puzzled.

"Because, you see, he felt there was no other way." Again her voice altered. "*All who are put on the range are put onto trains. All who are put onto trains meet the Man With The Hammer. All who stay home are kept there to breed others to go onto the range, and so betray themselves and their kind and their children forever*

*"We are brought into this life only to be victims; and there is no other way for us unless we save ourselves."*

"Do you understand?"

Still they were puzzled, she saw; and no wonder, poor things. But now the ancient lines rang in her memory, terrible and brave. They made her somehow proud. She began actually to want to say them.

"*'Never be taken,'*" she said. "*'Never be driven. Let those who can, kill Man. Let those who cannot, avoid him.'*"

She looked around at them.

"What else?" her son asked, and in his voice there was a rising valor.

She looked straight into his eyes. "*'Kill the yearlings'*" she said very gently. "*'Kill the calves.'*"

She saw the valor leave his eyes.

"Kill us?"

She nodded. "*'So long as Man holds dominion over us,'*" she said. And in dread and amazement she heard herself add, "*'Bear no young.'*"

With this they all looked at her at once in such a way that she loved her child, and all these others, as never before; and there dilated within her such a sorrowful and marveling grandeur that for a moment she saw nothing, and heard nothing except her own inward whisper, "Why, I am one alone. And of the herd, too. Both at once. All one."

Her son's voice brought her back. "Did they do what he told them to?"

The oldest one scoffed, "Would we be here, if they had?"

"They say some did," the mother replied. "Some tried. Not all."

"What did the men do to them?" another asked.

"I don't know," she said. "It was such a very long time ago."

"Do you believe it?" asked the oldest calf.

"There are some who believe it," she said.

"Do you?"

"I'm told that far back in the wildest corners of the range there are some of us, mostly very, very old ones, who have never been taken. It's said that they meet, every so often, to talk and just to think to-



gether about the heroism and the terror of two sublime Beings, The One Who Came Back, and The Man With The Hammer. Even here at home, some of the old ones, and some of us who are just old-fashioned, believe it, or parts of it anyway. I know there are some who say that a hollow at the center of the forehead—a sort of shadow of the Hammer's blow—is a sign of very special ability. And I remember how Great-grandmother used to sing an old, pious song, let's see now, yes, 'Be not like dumb-driven cattle, be a hero in the strife.' But there aren't many. Not any more."

"Do *you* believe it?" the oldest calf insisted; and now she was touched to realize that every one of them, from the oldest to the youngest, needed very badly to be sure about that.

"Of course not, silly," she said, and all at once she was overcome by a most curious shyness, for it occurred to her that in the course of time, this young thing might be bred to her. "It's just an old, old legend." With a tender little laugh she added, lightly, "We use it to frighten children with."

By now the light was long on the plain and the herd was only a fume of gold near the horizon. Behind it, dung steamed, and dust sank gently to the shattered ground. She looked far away for a moment, wondering. Something—it was like a forgotten word on the tip of the tongue. She felt the sudden chill of the late afternoon and she wondered what she had been wondering about. "Come, children," she said briskly, "it's high time for supper." And she turned away; they followed.

The trouble was, her son was thinking, you could never trust her. If she said a thing was so, she was probably just trying to get her way with you. If she said a thing wasn't so, it probably was so. But you never could be sure. Not without seeing for yourself. I'm going to go, he told himself, I don't care *what* she wants. And if it isn't so, why then I'll live on the range and make the great journey and find out what *is* so. And if what she told me was true, why then I'll know ahead of time and the one *I* will charge is The Man With The Hammer. I'll put Him and His Hammer out of the way forever, and that will make me an even better hero than The One Who Came Back.

So, when his mother glanced at him in concern, not quite daring to ask her question, he gave her his most docile smile, and snuggled his head against her, and she was comforted.

The littlest and youngest of them was doing double skips in his efforts to keep up with her. Now that he wouldn't be interrupting her, and none of the big ones would hear and make fun of him, he shyly whispered his question, so warmly moistly ticklish that she felt as if he were licking her ear.

"What is it, darling?" she asked, bending down.

"What's a train?"

# THE INDIAN WELL

WALTER VAN TILBURG CLARK



In this dead land, like a vast relief model, the only allegiance was to sun. Even night was not strong enough to resist; earth stretched gratefully under it, but had no hope that day would not return. Such living things as hoarded a little juice at their cores were secret about it, and only the most ephemeral existences, the air at dawn and sunset, the amethyst shadows in the mountains, had any freedom. The Indian Well alone, of lesser creations, was in constant revolt. Sooner or later all minor, breathing rebels came to its stone basin under the spring in the cliff, and from its overflow grew a meadow delta and two columns of willows and aspens holding a tiny front against the valley. The pictograph of a starving, ancient journey, cut in rock above the basin, a sun-warped shack on the south wing of the canyon, and an abandoned mine above it, were the last minute and practically contemporary tokens of man's participation in the cycles of the well's resistance, each of which was an epitome of centuries, and perhaps of the wars of the universe

The day before Jim Suttler came up in the early spring to take his part in one cycle was a busy day. The sun was merely lucid after four days of broken showers and one rain of an hour with a little cold wind behind it, and under the separate cloud shadows sliding down the mountain and into the valley, the canyon was alive. A rattler emerged partially from a hole in the mound on which the cabin stood, and having gorged in the darkness, rested with his head on a stone.

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A road-runner, stepping long and always about to sprint, came down the morning side of the mound, and his eye, quick to perceive the difference between the live and the inanimate of the same color, discovered the coffin-shaped head on the stone. At once he broke into a reaching sprint, his neck and tail stretched level, his beak agape with expectation. But his shadow arrived a step before him. The rattler recoiled, his head scarred by the sharp beak but his eye intact. The road-runner said nothing, but peered warily into the hole without stretching his neck, then walked off stiffly, leaning forward again as if about to run. When he had gone twenty feet he turned, balanced for an instant, and charged back, checking abruptly just short of the hole. The snake remained withdrawn. The road-runner paraded briefly before the hole, talking to himself, and then ran angrily up to the spring, where he drank at the overflow, sipping and stretching his neck, lifting his feet one at a time, ready to go into immediate action. The road-runner lived a dangerous and exciting life.

In the upper canyon the cliff swallows, making short harp notes, dipped and shot between the new mud under the aspens and their high community on the forehead of the cliff. Electrical bluebirds appeared to dart the length of the canyon at each low flight, but turned up tilting half way down. Lizards made similar unexpected flights and stops on the rocks, and when they stopped did rapid push-ups, like men exercising on a floor. They were variably pugnacious and timid.

Two of them arrived simultaneously upon a rock below the road-runner. One of them immediately skittered to a rock two feet off, and they faced each other, exercising. A small hawk coming down over the mountain, but shadowless under a cloud, saw the lizards. Having overfled the difficult target, he dropped to the canyon mouth swiftly and banked back into the wind. His trajectory was cleared of swallows but one of them, fluttering hastily up, dropped a pellet of mud between the lizards. The one who had retreated disappeared. The other flattened for an instant, then sprang and charged. The road-runner was on him as he struck the pellet, and galloped down the canyon in great, tense strides on his toes, the lizard lashing the air from his beak. The hawk stooped at the road-runner, thought better of it, and rose against the wind to the head of the canyon, where he turned back and coasted out over the desert, his shadow a little behind him and farther and farther below.

The swallows became the voice of the canyon again, but in moments when they were all silent the lovely smaller sounds emerged, their own feathering, the liquid overflow, the snapping and clicking of insects, a touch of wind in the new aspens. Under these lay still more delicate tones, erasing, in the most silent seconds, the difference between eye and ear, a white cloud shadow passing under the water of the well, a dark cloud shadow on the cliff, the aspen patterns on

the stones. Deepest was the permanent background of the rocks, the lost on the canyon floor, and those yet strong, the thinking cliffs. When the swallows began again it was impossible to understand the cliffs, who could afford to wait

At noon a red and white range cow with one new calf, shining and curled, came slowly up from the desert, stopping often to let the calf rest. At each stop the calf would try vigorously to feed, but the cow would go on. When they reached the well the cow drank slowly for a long time; then she continued to wrinkle the water with her muzzle, drinking a little and blowing, as if she found it hard to leave. The calf worked under her with spasmodic nudgings. When she was done playing with the water, she nosed and licked him out from under her and up to the well. He shied from the surprising coolness and she put him back. When he stayed, she drank again. He put his nose into the water also, and bucked up as if bitten. She continued to pretend, and he returned, got water up his nostrils and took three jumps away. The cow was content and moved off toward the canyon wall, tonguing grass tufts from among the rocks. Against the cliff she rubbed gently and continuously with a mild voluptuous look, occasionally lapping her nose with a serpent tongue. The loose winter shag came off in tufts on the rock. The calf lost her, became panicked and made desperate noises which stopped prematurely, and when he discovered her, complicated her toilet. Finally she led him down to the meadow where, moving slowly, they both fed until he was full and went to sleep in a ball in the sun. At sunset they returned to the well, where the cow drank again and gave him a second lesson. After this they went back into the brush and northward into the dusk. The cow's size and relative immunity to sudden death left an aftermath of peace, rendered gently humorous by the calf.

Also at sunset, there was a resurgence of life among the swallows. The thin golden air at the cliff tops, in which there were now no clouds so that the eastern mountains and the valley were flooded with unbroken light, was full of their cries and quick maneuvers among a dancing myriad of insects. The direct sun gave them, when they perched in rows upon the cliff, a dramatic significance like that of men upon an immensely higher promontory. As dusk rose out of the canyon, while the eastern peaks were still lighted, the swallows gradually became silent creatures with slightly altered flight, until, at twilight, the air was full of velvet, swooping bats.

In the night jack-rabbits multiplied spontaneously out of the brush of the valley, drank in the rivulet, their noses and great ears continuously searching the dark, electrical air, and played in fits and starts on the meadow, the many young hopping like rubber, or made thumping love among the aspens and the willows.

A coyote came down canyon on his belly and lay in the brush with his nose between his paws. He took a young rabbit in a quiet

spring and snap, and went into the brush again to eat it. At the slight rending of his meal the meadow cleared of leaping shadows and lay empty in the starlight. The rabbits, however, encouraged by newcomers, returned soon, and the coyote killed again and went off heavily, the jack's great hind legs dragging.

In the dry-wash below the meadow an old coyote, without family, profited by the second panic, which came over him. He ate what his loose teeth could tear, leaving the open remnant in the sand, drank at the basin and, carefully circling the meadow, disappeared into the dry wilderness.

Shortly before dawn, when the stars had lost luster and there was no sound in the canyon but the rivulet and the faint, separate clickings of mice in the gravel, nine antelope in loose file, with three silently flagging fawns, came on trigger toe up the meadow and drank at the well, heads often up, muzzles dripping, broad ears turning. In the meadow they grazed and the fawns nursed. When there was as much gray as darkness in the air, and new wind in the canyon, they departed, the file weaving into the brush, merging into the desert, to nothing, and the swallows resumed the talkative day shift.

Jim Suttler and his burro came up into the meadow a little after noon, very slowly, though there was only a spring-fever warmth. Suttler walked pigeon-toed, like an old climber, but carefully and stuffy, not with the loose walk natural to such a long-legged man. He stopped in the middle of the meadow, took off his old black sombrero, and stared up at the veil of water shining over the edge of the basin.

"We're none too early, Jenny," he said to the burro.

The burro had felt water for miles, but could show no excitement. She stood with her head down and her four legs spread unnaturally, as if to postpone a collapse. Her pack reared higher than Suttler's head, and was hung with casks, pails, canteens, a pick, two shovels, a crowbar and a rifle in a sheath. Suttler had the cautious uncertainty of his trade. His other burro had died two days before in the mountains east of Beatty, and Jenny and he bore its load.

Suttler shifted his old six shooter from his rump to his thigh, and studied the well, the meadow, the cabin and the mouth of the mine as if he might choose not to stay. He was not a cinema prospector. If he looked like one of the probably mistaken conceptions of Christ, with his red beard and red hair to his shoulders, it was because he had been long away from barbers and without spare water for shaving. He was unlike Christ in some other ways also.

"It's kinda run down," he told Jenny, "but we'll take it."

He put his sombrero back on, let his pack fall slowly to the ground, showing the sweat patch in his bleached brown shirt, and began to unload Jenny carefully, like a collector handling rare vases, and put everything into one neat pile.

"Now," he said, "we'll have a drink." His tongue and lips were

so swollen that the words were unclear, but he spoke casually, like a club-man sealing a minor deal. One learns to do business slowly with deserts and mountains. He picked up a bucket and started for the well. At the upper edge of the meadow he looked back. Jenny was still standing with her head down and her legs apart. He did not particularly notice her extreme thinness for he had seen it coming on gradually. He was thinner himself, and tall, and so round-shouldered that when he stood his straightest he seemed to be peering ahead with his chin out.

"Come on, you old fool," he said. "It's off you now."

Jenny came, stumbling in the rocks above the meadow, and stopping often as if to decide why this annoyance recurred. When she became interested, Suttler would not let her get to the basin, but for ten minutes gave her water from his cupped hands, a few licks at a time. Then he drove her off and she stood in the shade of the canyon wall watching him. He began on his thirst in the same way, a gulp at a time, resting between gulps. After ten gulps he sat on a rock by the spring and looked at the little meadow and the big desert, and might have been considering the courses of the water through his body, but noticed also the antelope tracks in the mud.

After a time he drank another half dozen gulps, gave Jenny half a pailful, and drove her down to the meadow, where he spread a dirty blanket in the striped sun and shadow under the willows. He sat on the edge of the blanket, rolled a cigarette and smoked it while he watched Jenny. When she began to graze with her rump to the canyon, he flicked his cigarette onto the grass, rolled over with his back to the sun and slept until it became chilly after sunset. Then he woke, ate a can of beans, threw the can into the willows and led Jenny up to the well, where they drank together from the basin for a long time. While she resumed her grazing, he took another blanket and his rifle from the pile, removed his heel-worn boots, stood his rifle against a fork, and, rolling up in both blankets, slept again.

In the night many rabbits played in the meadow in spite of the strong sweat and tobacco smell of Jim Suttler lying under the willows, but the antelope, when they came in the dead dark before dawn, were nervous, drank less, and did not graze but minced quickly back across the meadow and began to run at the head of the dry wash. Jenny slept with her head hanging, and did not hear them come or go.

Suttler woke lazy and still red-eyed, and spent the morning drinking at the well, eating and dozing on his blanket. In the afternoon, slowly, a few things at a time, he carried his pile to the cabin. He had a bachelor's obsession with order, though he did not mind dirt, and pattered until sundown making a brush bed and arranging his gear. Much of this time, however, was spent studying the records, on the cabin walls, of the recent human life of the well. He had to be careful,

because among the still legible names and dates, after Frank Davis, 1893, Willard Harbinger, 1893, London, England, John Mason, June 13, 1887, Bucksport, Maine, Matthew Kenling, from Glasgow, 1891, Penelope and Martin Reave, God Guide Us, 1885, was written Frank Hayward, 1492, feeling my age. There were other wits too. John Barr had written, Giv it back to the injuns, and Kenneth Thatcher, two years later, had written under that, Pity the noble redskin, while another man, whose second name was Evans, had written what was already a familiar libel, since it was not strictly true: Fifty miles from water, a hundred miles from wood, a million miles from God, three feet from hell. Someone unnamed had felt differently, saying, God is kind. We may make it now. Shot an antelope here July 10, 188— and the last number blurred. Arthur Smith, 1881, had recorded, Here berried my beloved wife Semantha, age 22, and my soul. God let me keep the child. J.M. said cryptically, Good luck, John, and Bill said, Ralph, if you come this way, am trying to get to Los Angeles. B. Westover said he had recovered from his wound there in 1884, and Galt said, enigmatically and without date, Bart and Miller burned to death in the Yellow Jacket. I don't care now. There were poets too, of both parties. What could still be read of Byron Cotter's verses, written in 1902, said,

*. . . here alone  
Each shining dawn I greet,  
The Lord's wind on my forehead  
And where he set his feet  
One mark of heel remaining  
Each day filled up anew,  
To keep my soul from burning,  
With clear, celestial dew.  
Here in His Grace abiding  
The mortal years and few  
I shall . . .*

but you can't tell what he intended, while J.A. had printed,

*My brother came out in '49  
I came in '51  
At first we thought we liked it fine  
But now, by God, we're done.*

Suttler studied these records without smiling, like someone reading a funny paper, and finally, with a heavy blue pencil, registered, Jim and Jenny Suttler, damn dried out, March—and paused, but had no way of discovering the day—1940.

In the evening he sat on the steps watching the swallows in the golden upper canyon turn bats in the dusk, and thought about the antelope. He had seen the new tracks also, and it alarmed him a little

that the antelope could have passed twice in the dark without waking him.

Before false dawn he was lying in the willows with his carbine at ready. Rabbits ran from the meadow when he came down, and after that there was no movement. He wanted to smoke. When he did see them at the lower edge of the meadow, he was startled, yet made no quick movement, but slowly pivoted to cover them. They made poor targets in that light and backed by the pale desert, appearing and disappearing before his eyes. He couldn't keep any one of them steadily visible, and decided to wait until they made contrast against the meadow. But his presence was strong. One of the antelope advanced onto the green, but then threw its head up, spun, and ran back past the flank of the herd, which swung after him. Suttler rose quickly and raised the rifle, but let it down without firing. He could hear the light rattle of their flight in the wash, but had only a belief that he could see them. He had few cartridges, and the report and ponderous echo under the cliffs would scare them off for weeks.

His energies, however, were awakened by the frustrated hunt. While there was still more light than heat in the canyon, he climbed to the abandoned mine tunnel at the top of the alluvial wing of the cliff. He looked at the broken rock in the dump, kicked up its pack with a boot toe, and went into the tunnel, peering closely at its sides, in places black with old smoke smudges. At the back he struck two matches and looked at the jagged dead end and the fragments on the floor, then returned to the shallow beginning of a side tunnel. At the second match here he knelt quickly, scrutinized a portion of the rock, and when the match went out at once lit another. He lit six matches, and pulled at the rock with his hand. It was firm.

"The poor chump," he said aloud.

He got a loose rock from the tunnel and hammered at the projection with it. It came finally, and he carried it into the sun on the dump.

"Yessir," he said aloud, after a minute.

He knocked his sample into three pieces and examined each minutely.

"Yessir, yessir," he said with malicious glee, and, grinning at the tunnel, "The poor chump."

Then he looked again at the dump, like the mound before a gigantic gopher hole. "Still, that's a lot of digging," he said.

He put sample chips into his shirt pocket, keeping a small, black, heavy one that had fallen neatly from a hole like a borer's to play with in his hand. After trouble he found the claim pile on the side hill south of the tunnel, its top rocks tumbled into the shale. Under the remaining rocks he found what he wanted, a ragged piece of yellowed paper between two boards. The writing was in pencil, and not diplomatic. "I hereby clame this whole damn side hill as far as I can shoot



north and south and as far as I can dig in. I am a good shot. Keep off. John Barr, April 11, 1897."

Jim Suttler grinned. "Tough guy, eh?" he said.

He made a small ceremony of burning the paper upon a stone from the cairn. The black tinsel of ash blew off and broke into flakes.

"O K., John Barr?" he asked.

"O.K., Suttler," he answered himself.

In blue pencil, on soiled paper from his pocket, he slowly printed, "Becus of the lamented desease of the late clament, John Barr, I now clame these diggins for myself and partner Jenny. I can shoot too." And wrote rather than printed, "James T. Suttler, March—" and paused.

"Make it an even month," he said, and wrote, "11, 1940." Underneath he wrote, "Jenny Suttler, her mark," and drew a skull with long ears.

"There," he said, and folded the paper, put it between the two boards, and rebuilt the cairn into a neat pyramid above it.

In high spirit he was driven to cleanliness. With scissors, soap and razor he climbed to the spring. Jenny was there, drinking.

"When you're done," he said, and when she lifted her head, pulled her ears and scratched her.

"Maybe we've got something here, Jenny," he said

Jenny observed him soberly and returned to the meadow.

"She doesn't believe me," he said, and began to perfect himself. He sheared off his red tresses in long hanks, then cut closer, and went over yet a third time, until there remained a brush, of varying density, of stiff red bristles, through which his scalp shone whitely. He sheared the beard likewise, then knelt to the well for mirror and shaved painfully. He also shaved his neck and about his ears. He arose younger and less impressive, with jaws as pale as his scalp, so that his sunburn was a red domino. He burned tresses and beard ceremoniously upon a sage bush, and announced, "It is spring."

He began to empty the pockets of his shirt and breeches onto a flat stone, yelling, "In the spring a young man's fancy," to a kind of tune, and paused, struck by the facts.

"Oh yeah?" he said. "Fat chance"

"Fat," he repeated with obscene consideration. "Oh, well," he said, and finished piling upon the rock notebooks, pencils stubs, cartridges, tobacco, knife, stump pipe, matches, chalk, samples, and three wrinkled photographs. One of the photographs he observed at length before weighting it down with a .45 cartridge. It showed a round, blonde girl with a big smile on a stupid face, in a patterned calico house dress, in front of a blossoming rhododendron bush.

He added to this deposit his belt and holster with the big .45.

Then he stripped himself, washed and rinsed his garments in the

spring, and spread them upon stones and brush, and carefully arranged four flat stones into a platform beside the trough. Standing there he scooped water over himself, gasping, made it a lather, and at last, face and copper bristles also foaming, gropingly entered the basin, and submerged, flooding the water over in a thin and soapy sheet. His head emerged at once. "My God," he whispered. He remained under, however, till he was soapless, and goose pimples as a file, when he climbed out cautiously onto the rock platform and performed a dance of small, revolving patterns with a great deal of up and down.

At one point in his dance he observed the pictograph journey upon the cliff, and danced nearer to examine it.

"Ignorant," he pronounced. "Like a little kid," he said.

He was intrigued, however, by more recent records, names smoked and cut upon the lower rock. One of these, in script, like a gigantic handwriting deeply cut, said ALVAREZ BLANCO DE TOLEDO, Anno D<sup>i</sup> 1624. A very neat, upright cross was chiseled beneath it.

Suttler grinned. "Oh, yeah?" he asked, with his head upon one side. "Nuts," he said, looking at it squarely.

But it inspired him, and with his jack-knife he began scraping beneath the possibly Spanish inscription. His knife, however, made scratches, not incisions. He completed a bad Jim and Jenny and quit, saying, "I should kill myself over a phony wop."

Thereafter, for weeks, while the canyon became increasingly like a furnace in the daytime and the rocks stayed warm at night, he drove his tunnel farther into the mountain and piled the dump farther into the gully, making, at one side of the entrance, a heap of ore to be worked, and occasionally adding a peculiarly heavy pebble to the others in his small leather bag with a draw string. He and Jenny thrived upon this fixed and well-watered life. The hollows disappeared from his face and he became less stringy, while Jenny grew round, her battleship-gray pelt even lustrous and its black markings distinct and ornamental. The burro found time from her grazing to come to the cabin door in the evenings and attend solemnly to Suttler playing with his samples and explaining their future.

"Then, old lady," Suttler said, "you will carry only small children, one at a time, for never more than half an hour. You will have a bedroom with French windows and a mattress, and I will paint your feet gold.

"The children," he said, "will probably be red-headed, but maybe blonde. Anyway, they will be beautiful.

"After we've had a holiday, of course," he added. "For one hundred and thirty-three nights," he said dreamily. "Also," he said, "just one hundred and thirty-three quarts. I'm no drunken bum.

"For you, though," he said, "for one hundred and thirty-three

nights a quiet hotel with other old ladies. I should drag my own mother in the gutter." He pulled her head down by the ears and kissed her loudly upon the nose. They were very happy together.

Nor did they greatly alter most of the life of the canyon. The antelope did not return, it is true, the rabbits were fewer and less playful because he sometimes snared them for meat, the little, clean mice and desert rats avoided the cabin they had used, and the road-runner did not come in daylight after Suttler, for fun, narrowly missed him with a piece of ore from the tunnel mouth. Suttler's violence was disproportionate perhaps, when he used his .45 to blow apart a creamy rat who did invade the cabin, but the loss was insignificant to the pattern of the well, and more than compensated when he one day caught the rattler extended at the foot of the dump in a drunken stupor from rare young rabbit, and before it could recoil held it aloft by the tail and snapped its head off, leaving the heavy body to turn slowly for a long time among the rocks. The dominant voices went undisturbed, save when he sang badly at his work or said beautiful things to Jenny in a loud voice.

There were, however, two more noticeable changes, one of which, at least, was important to Suttler himself. The first was the execution of the range cow's calf in the late fall, when he began to suggest a bull. Suttler felt a little guilty about this because the calf might have belonged to somebody, because the cow remained near the meadow bawling for two nights, and because the calf had come to meet the gun with more curiosity than challenge. But when he had the flayed carcass hung in the mine tunnel in a wet canvas, the sensation of providence overcame any qualms.

The other change was more serious. It occurred at the beginning of such winter as the well had, when there was sometimes a light rime on the rocks at dawn, and the aspens held only a few yellow leaves. Suttler thought often of leaving. The nights were cold, the fresh meat was eaten, his hopes had diminished as he still found only occasional nuggets, and his dreams of women, if less violent, were more nostalgic. The canyon held him with a feeling he would have called lonesome but at home, yet he probably would have gone except for this second change.

In the higher mountains to the west, where there was already snow, and at dawn a green winter sky, hunger stirred a buried memory in a cougar. He had twice killed antelope at the well, and felt there had been time enough again. He came down from the dwarfed trees and crossed the narrow valley under the stars, sometimes stopping abruptly to stare intently about, like a house-cat in a strange room. After each stop he would at once resume a quick, noiseless trot. From the top of the mountain above the spring he came down very slowly on his belly, but there was nothing at the well. He relaxed, and leaning

on the rim of the basin, drank, listening between laps. His nose was clean with fasting, and he knew of the man in the cabin and Jenny in the meadow, but they were strange, not what he remembered about the place. But neither had his past made him fearful. It was only habitual hunting caution which made him go down into the willows carefully, and lie there head up, watching Jenny, but still waiting for antelope, which he had killed before near dawn. The strange smells were confusing and therefore irritating. After an hour he rose and went silently to the cabin, from which the strangest smell came strongly, a carnivorous smell which did not arouse appetite, but made him bristle nervously. The tobacco in it was like pins in his nostrils. He circled the cabin, stopping frequently. At the open door the scent was violent. He stood with his front paws up on the step, moving his head in serpent motions, the end of his heavy tail furling and unfurling constantly. In a dream Suttler turned over without waking, and muttered. The cougar crouched, his eyes intent, his ruff lifting. Then he swung away from the door, growling a little, and after one pause, crept back down to the meadow again and lay in the willows, but where he could watch the cabin also.

When the sky was alarmingly pale and the antelope had not come, he crawled a few feet at a time, behind the willows, to a point nearer Jenny. There he crouched, working his hind legs slowly under him until he was set, and sprang, raced the three or four jumps to the drowsy burro, and struck. The beginning of her mortal scream was severed, but having made an imperfect leap, and from no height, the cat did not at once break her neck, but drove her to earth, where her small hooves churned futilely in the sod, and chewed and worried until she lay still.

Jim Suttler was nearly awakened by the fragment of scream, but heard nothing after it, and sank again.

The cat wrestled Jenny's body into the willows, fed with uncertain relish, drank long at the well, and went slowly over the crest, stopping often to look back. In spite of the light and the beginning talk of the swallows, the old coyote also fed and was gone before Suttler woke.

When Suttler found Jenny, many double columns of regimented ants were already at work, streaming in and out of the interior and mounting like bridge workers upon the ribs. Suttler stood and looked down. He desired to hold the small muzzle in the hollow of his hand, feeling that this familiar gesture would get through to Jenny, but couldn't bring himself to it because of what had happened to that side of her head. He squatted and lifted one hoof on its stiff leg and held that. Ants emerged hurriedly from the fetlock, their lines of communication broken. Two of them made disorganized excursions on the back of his hand. He rose, shook them off, and stood staring again. He

didn't say anything because he spoke easily only when cheerful or excited, but a determination was beginning in him. He followed the drag to the spot torn by the small hoofs. Among the willows again, he found the tracks of both the cougar and the coyote, and the cat's tracks again at the well and by the cabin doorstep. He left Jenny in the willows with a canvas over her during the day, and did not eat.

At sunset he sat on the doorstep, cleaning his rifle and oiling it until he could spring the lever almost without sound. He filled the clip, pressed it home, and sat with the gun across his knees until dark, when he put on his sheepskin, stuffed a scarf into the pocket, and went down to Jenny. He removed the canvas from her, rolled it up and held it under his arm.

"I'm sorry, old woman," he said. "Just tonight."

There was a little cold wind in the willows. It rattled the upper branches lightly.

Suttler selected a spot thirty yards down wind, from which he could see Jenny, spread the canvas and lay down upon it, facing toward her. After an hour he was afraid of falling asleep and sat up against a willow clump. He sat there all night. A little after midnight the old coyote came into the dry-wash below him. At the top of the wash he sat down, and when the mingled scents gave him a clear picture of the strategy, let his tongue loll out, looked at the stars for a moment with his mouth silently open, rose and trotted back into the desert.

At the beginning of daylight the younger coyote trotted in from the north, and turned up toward the spring, but saw Jenny. He sat down and looked at her for a long time. Then he moved to the west and sat down again. In the wind was only winter, and the water, and faintly the acrid bat dung in the cliffs. He completed the circle, but not widely enough, walking slowly through the willows, down the edge of the meadow and in again not ten yards in front of the following muzzle of the carbine. Like Jenny, he felt his danger too late. The heavy slug caught him at the base of the skull in the middle of the first jump, so that it was amazingly accelerated for a fraction of a second. The coyote began it alive, and ended it quite dead, but with a tense muscular movement conceived which resulted in a grotesque final leap and twist of the hindquarters alone, leaving them propped high against a willow clump while the head was half buried in the sand, red welling up along the lips of the distended jaws. The cottony underpelt of the tail and rump stirred gleefully in the wind.

When Suttler kicked the body and it did not move, he suddenly dropped his gun, grasped it by the upright hind legs, and hurled it out into the sage-brush. His face appeared slightly insane with fury for that instant. Then he picked up his gun and went back to the cabin, where he ate, and drank half of one of his last three bottles of whiskey.

In the middle of the morning he came down with his pick and shovel, dragged Jenny's much lightened body down into the dry-wash, and dug in the rock and sand for two hours. When she was covered, he erected a small cairn of stone, like the claim post, above her

"If it takes a year," he said, and licked the salt sweat on his lips.

That day he finished the half bottle and drank all of a second one, and became very drunk, so that he fell asleep during his vigil in the willows, sprawled wide on the dry turf and snoring. He was not disturbed. There was a difference in his smell after that day which prevented even the rabbits from coming into the meadow. He waited five nights in the willows. Then he transferred his watch to a niche in the cliff, across from and just below the spring

All winter, while the day wind blew long veils of dust across the desert, regularly repeated, like waves or the smoke of line artillery fire, and the rocks shrank under the cold glitter of night, he did not miss a watch. He learned to go to sleep at sundown, wake within a few minutes of midnight, go up to his post, and become at once clear headed and watchful. He talked to himself in the mine and the cabin, but never in the niche. His supplies ran low, and he ate less, but would not risk a startling shot. He rationed his tobacco, and when it was gone worked up to a vomiting sickness every three days for nine days, but did not miss a night in the niche. All winter he did not remove his clothes, bathe, shave, cut his hair or sing. He worked the dead mine only to be busy, and became thin again, with sunken eyes which yet were not the eyes he had come with the spring before. It was April, his food almost gone, when he got his chance.

There was a half moon that night, which made the canyon walls black, and occasionally gleamed on wrinkles of the overflow. The cat came down so quietly that Suttler did not see him until he was beside the basin. The animal was suspicious. He took the wind, and twice started to drink, and didn't, but crouched. On Suttler's face there was a set grin which exposed his teeth

"Not even a drink, you bastard," he thought.

The cat drank a little though, and dropped again, softly, trying to get the scent from the meadow. Suttler drew slowly upon his soul in the trigger. When it gave, the report was magnified impressively in the canyon. The cougar sprang straight into the air and screamed outrageously. The back of Suttler's neck was cold and his hands trembled, but he shucked the lever and fired again. This shot ricocheted from the basin and whined away thinly. The first, however, had struck near enough, the cat began to scramble rapidly on the loose stone, at first without voice, then screaming repeatedly. It doubled upon itself snarling and chewing in a small furious circle, fell and began to throw itself in short, leaping spasms upon the stones, struck across the rim of the tank and lay half in the water, its head and shoulders raised in one corner and resting against the cliff. Suttler

could hear it breathing hoarsely and snarling very faintly. The soprano chorus of swallows gradually became silent.

Suttler had risen to fire again, but lowered the carbine and advanced, stopping at every step to peer intently and listen for the hoarse breathing, which continued. Even when he was within five feet of the tank the cougar did not move, except to gasp so that the water again splashed from the basin. Suttler was calmed by the certainty of accomplishment. He drew the heavy revolver from his holster, aimed carefully at the rattling head, and fired again. The canyon boomed, and the east responded faintly and a little behind, but Suttler did not hear them, for the cat thrashed heavily in the tank, splashing him as with a bucket, and then lay still on its side over the edge, its muzzle and forepaws hanging. The water was settling quietly in the tank, but Suttler stirred it again, shooting five more times with great deliberation into the heavy body, which did not move except at the impact of the slugs.

The rest of the night, even after the moon was gone, he worked fiercely, slitting and tearing with his knife. In the morning, under the swallows, he dragged the marbled carcass, still bleeding a little in places, onto the rocks on the side away from the spring, and dropped it. Dragging the ragged hide by the neck, he went unsteadily down the canyon to the cabin, where he slept like a drunkard, although his whiskey had been gone for two months.

In the afternoon, with dreaming eyes, he bore the pelt to Jenny's grave, took down the stones with his hands, shoveled the earth from her, covered her with the skin, and again with earth and the cairn.

He looked at this monument. "There," he said.

That night, for the first time since her death, he slept through.

In the morning, at the well, he repeated his cleansing ritual of a year before, save that they were rags he stretched to dry, even to the dance upon the rock platform while drying. Squatting naked and clean, shaven and clipped, he looked for a long time at the grinning countenance, now very dirty, of the plump girl in front of the blossoming rhododendrons, and in the resumption of his dance he made singing noises accompanied by the words, "Spring, spring, beautiful spring." He was a starved but revived and volatile spirit.

An hour later he went south, his boot soles held on by canvas strips, and did not once look back.

The disturbed life of the spring resumed. In the second night the rabbits loved in the willows, and at the end of a week the rats played in the cabin again. The old coyote and a vulture cleaned the cougar, and his bones fell apart in the shale. The road-runner came up one day, tentatively, and in front of the tunnel snatched up a horned toad and ran with it around the corner, but no farther. After a month the antelope returned. The well brimmed, and in the gentle sunlight the new aspen leaves made a tiny music of shadows.





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